

12 | 2024

A SURVEY:

Understanding the Needs of Unstably Housed Youth in New York City



Meredith Dank, PhD

Research Professor, New York University, Marron Institute of Urban Management

Andrea Hughes, LMSW

Qualitative Research Consultant

Gerilouise Dimas, PhD

Assistant Professor, Bryant University, Department of Information Systems and Analytics, Data Science

Yaren Bilge Kaya, PhD

Lecturer, Columbia University, Department of Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

Renata Konrad, PhD

Associate Professor, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, The Business School

Kayse Lee Maass, PhD

Assistant Professor, Northeastern University, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering

Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to the unstably housed youth of New York City. Their courage in opening up about their lives has provided invaluable insights that are fundamental to the integrity and impact of this study. Their voices and perspectives are at the heart of our findings and recommendations. To all of you who participated, your contribution is immeasurable and deeply appreciated.

The data collected for this report would not have been possible without the cooperation of many service providers and other stakeholders. We are extremely grateful for their assistance facilitating access to their clients for survey administration and for sharing their insights, experiences, and recommendations. We are also indebted to the service providers, and other stakeholders in each study site who provided information during interviews.

The authors thank a number of individuals for their tireless dedication, support, and data collection efforts on this study, including Jamie Powlovich, New Arrivals Monitoring Team Supervisor at the Coalition for the Homeless and Cole Giannone, DEI Advocate and Youth Services Expert. The authors would additionally like to recognize the work and invaluable insights and research contributions of Prof. Andrew C. Trapp.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1935602 “ISN2: Disrupting Human Trafficking via Needs Matching and Capacity Expansion.” The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the National Science Foundation or of New York University, Northeastern University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, their trustees, or their funders.

Table of Contents

1. <u>Introduction</u>	5
2. <u>Methodology</u>	8
2.1. <u>Survey Design and Structure</u>	9
2.1.1. <u>Survey Sections and Contents</u>	9
2.1.2. <u>Design Considerations</u>	10
2.1.3. <u>Finalizing the Survey through Collaborative Review</u>	10
2.2. <u>Data Collection</u>	11
2.2.1. <u>Initial Plan and Adjustments</u>	11
2.2.2. <u>Execution and Data Collection Team</u>	11
2.2.3. <u>Survey Administration</u>	12
2.3. <u>Qualitative Data Collection</u>	12
2.4. <u>Data Analysis Approach</u>	12
2.4.1. <u>Descriptive Analysis</u>	12
2.4.2. <u>Statistical Analysis</u>	13
3. <u>Results</u>	14
3.1. <u>Demographics</u>	14
3.1.1. <u>General Demographics (Age, gender, race, ...)</u>	15
3.1.2. <u>Youth with Children</u>	16
3.1.3. <u>Education</u>	17
3.1.4. <u>Where Participants Grew Up</u>	18
3.2. <u>Youth History</u>	21
3.2.1. <u>History of Homelessness</u>	21
3.2.2. <u>Childhood History</u>	23
3.2.3. <u>Work History</u>	26
3.2.4. <u>Sex and Labor Trafficking Experiences</u>	29
3.2.5. <u>Mental Health History</u>	32
3.2.6. <u>History of Experiences with Violence, Substance Use and Abuse and the Criminal Justice System</u>	33
3.3. <u>Summarization of Desired Services</u>	33
3.3.1. <u>Mental Health Services</u>	35

3.3.2. <u>Medical and Dental Care</u>	37
3.3.3. <u>Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment</u>	38
3.3.4. <u>Crisis and 24- Hour Response Services</u>	39
3.3.5. <u>Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services</u>	40
3.3.6. <u>Legal Assistance</u>	42
3.3.7. <u>Service Coordination</u>	43
3.3.8. <u>Practical Assistance</u>	44
3.3.9. <u>Financial assistance</u>	46
3.3.10. <u>Life Skills</u>	46
3.3.11. <u>Employment Assistance</u>	48
3.3.12. <u>Educational Assistance</u>	50
3.3.13. <u>Childcare or Parenting Help</u>	51
3.4. <u>Access and Preferences for Housing and Support Services</u>	52
3.4.1. <u>Preferred Shelter Type</u>	52
3.4.2. <u>Preferred Shelter Size</u>	53
3.4.3. <u>Preferred Shelter Demographics</u>	54
3.4.4. <u>Who Would You Want Shelter / Services For</u>	55
3.4.5. <u>Preferred Shelter Characteristics</u>	55
3.4.6. <u>Shelter Characteristics Challenging to Follow</u>	58
3.4.7. <u>Shelter Wellness Activities</u>	58
3.4.8. <u>Borough Currently Receiving Services</u>	59
3.4.9. <u>Borough Prefer to Receive Services</u>	60
3.5. <u>Comparison of Services Across Demographic Groups</u>	61
3.5.1. <u>Runaway from Guardian</u>	62
3.5.2. <u>Kicked out by Guardian</u>	63
3.5.3. <u>Human Trafficking Indicators</u>	64
3.5.4. <u>Mental Health Diagnosis</u>	65
3.5.5. <u>Immigration Status and Citizenship</u>	66
3.5.6. <u>Age</u>	67
3.5.7. <u>Race / Ethnicity</u>	68
4. <u>Conclusions</u>	69

Quick Facts

- The survey was deployed over two years from December 2021 through June 2023 across nine RHY programs gathering data from 387 (384 included in final analysis) unstably housed youth in NYC.
- Seven focus groups across four RHY programs with 35 youth were also conducted.

General Demographics

- The majority of study participants (65%) were ages 18 to 21.
- Over half of the youth (63%) identified as cis-gender, with 38% of the study participants identifying as cis-gender male and 26.6% as cis-female.
- Of young people, 13% identified as transgender and 10% as non-binary.
- Study participants were evenly split between identifying as LGB+ (47%) and those identifying as heterosexual (48%).
- Almost half of the young people (42%) said they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and 65% identified as Black or African American.
- The majority of participants (70%) were not currently attending any educational institution, with 36% reporting a high school diploma as their highest level of education obtained and 18% reporting not have completing high school or obtained a GED.
- The majority of participants (83%) said they were born in the United States with 91% of them growing up in NYC.
- Of the young people who said they were not born in the United States (15%), over half (53%) had legal permanent residence status.

History of Homelessness

- A significant portion of participants (38%) have experienced homelessness for more than 1 year over their lifetime and 33% said they are currently experiencing homelessness for more than 1 year.
- When asked where participants slept most nights over the past month, the most common location was at a shelter (32%); 62% were staying elsewhere.

Childhood History

- A majority of youth (54%) have experienced running away from their parent or guardian's home and 59% reported have been kicked out.
- Youth reported running away from home primarily due to emotional abuse (37%), conflicts with parents or guardians (29%), and physical abuse (27%).
- Reasons for being kicked out include parental rejection (23%), failure to comply with rules (22%), and parental prioritization of romantic relationships over their child's well-being (16%).
- It is important to note that 23% of the youth who had run away from home did so due to parents/guardians not accepting them for who they were, which was reflected in the focus groups, with several participants sharing that they left home because of family rejection due to gender or sexual orientation.

Work History

- Over half of youth (52%) had reported previous work experience, with 37% reporting no work experience.

- Survey participants indicated they were often employed in unstable, part-time, low-wage jobs with 56% saying they worked in the restaurant industry, 31% worked in retail, and 14% did some form of office work.
- Focus group participants also spoke of having a series of low paying jobs where they were never earning enough to meet their needs.

Sex and Labor Trafficking Experiences

- Almost half of the youth surveyed (46%) said they experienced at least one of the human trafficking indicators at work.
- Of those who had reported at least one indicator, 32% had experienced three or more, 22% experienced one and 10% had experienced two.
- The most common exploitative experience reported was someone they worked for refusing to pay what they promised and kept all or most of the money the youth made (28%).
- Survey participants also reported being exploited for sex, where 18% said they traded sexual acts for necessities for survival before the age of 18, 15% of said someone they worked for asked, pressured, or forced them to do something sexually they didn't feel comfortable doing, and 11% said someone they worked for forced them to engage in sexual acts with family, friends, clients, or business associates for money or favors.

Mental Health History

- A high percentage of youth said they received depression related diagnoses (54%), anxiety related diagnoses (58%), as well as diagnosis of PTSD (37%) and neurodevelopmental related diagnosis (57%).
- Over 62% of all youth reported having 2 or more mental health conditions.

Youth Desired Services (Across 13 Services)

- Over half of the youth were interested in **mental health services** (55%).
- Almost two-thirds (62%) of survey participants were interested in receiving **medical and dental services**.
- Less than a quarter of survey participants (20%) were interested in receiving **substance abuse and alcohol treatment services**.
- A majority of survey participants were interested in services to help them achieve housing stability through **long term supportive housing and shelter services** (66%).
- A large proportion of youth (45%) were interested in **legal services** now or in the future.
- Fifty-seven percent of survey participants were interested in receiving **service coordination and advocacy**.
- Forty-five percent of youth were interested in **crisis intervention services** now or in the future.
- Over half of survey participants were interested in **practical assistance** (69%).
- Many youth were interested in receiving **financial assistance** (76%).
- A significant percentage of youth were interested in **life skills services** (67%).
- The majority of youth were interested in receiving **employment assistance services** (71%).

- Sixty-six percent of survey participants expressed interest in receiving **educational assistance services**.
- Thirty-three percent of the survey participants expressed interest in receiving **childcare and parenting services** now or in the future.

Service Comparisons Across Groups

- Youth with experiences running away from their parent or guardian statistically expressed a greater desire for Life Skills (10.6%), Long Term Housing and Shelter Support (12.8%), and Mental Health Services (11.4%).
- Youth with experiences of getting kicked out by their parent or guardian statistically expressed a greater desire for all services except Legal Assistance.
- Youth who reported experiencing at least one of the six human trafficking indicators statistically expressed a greater desire across a majority (nine) of the services with the largest difference in Parenting/Childcare (24.5%) and Substance and Alcohol Abuse Services (22%) services.
- Youth who self-disclosed at least two mental health diagnoses had statistically expressed a greater desire for all 13 services.
- Youth who were not born in the United States statistically expressed a greater desire for legal services.

Preferred Shelter Characteristics

- Thirty-five percent of survey participants said they would feel most comfortable and safe staying in a shelter with 10 or less beds and 18% indicated that shelter size isn't a factor in feeling comfortable and safe.
- Thirty-one percent of survey participants said they would prefer LGBT+ specific shelter, 26% said they prefer female only, 26% said they prefer mixed gender and sexual orientations, 12% preferred male only, and 9% preferred transgender only shelter.
- Twenty percent of youth wanted to be able to stay in a shelter with their partner, 19% with a friend, 16% with their pet, 9% with family and 7% with their children.
- The preferred shelter characteristic chosen the most by study participants was 24-hour security/staff (46%), onsite case manager and therapist (34%), 31% regular activities within the shelter.
- The least desired shelter characteristics are curfew (10%) and no outside visitors (12%), which corresponds to the top characteristics that would be most difficult to follow with curfew at 44% and no outside visitors at 20%.
- The majority of survey participants were interested in participating in various activities at shelters including playing video games (55%), art classes (49%), sports or exercise classes (43%), museum visits (41%) and open mic night (38%).
- Youth provided information on **where they are currently accessing services** across the five boroughs: Manhattan (42%), The Bronx (26%), Brooklyn (20%), Queens (13%) and Staten Island (4%).
- Youth expressed preferences in **where they wish to access services** across the five boroughs: Manhattan (32%), The Bronx (20%), Brooklyn (20%), Queens (12%) and Staten Island (5%).

1. Introduction

Youth experiencing unstable housing is a significant issue in the United States. It is estimated that at least one in 30 adolescents ages 13-17 and one in 10 youth ages 18-25 experience unstable housing over the course of a year (Morton, Dworsky, & Samuels, 2017). In New York City (NYC), the dearth of affordable housing and a lack of living-wage youth employment opportunities make it especially difficult for youth to find and remain in stable, safe housing. Over the last several years, NYC has seen an increase in school aged children and youth experiencing homelessness and unstable housing (AFC, 2023). In the 2021 annual count of homeless and unstably housed youth in NYC, 5734 youth ages 14 to 24 were found to be living in shelters, street homeless, or unstably housed (e.g., couch surfing) (HUD, 2022).

LGBT+ youth and youth of color are disproportionately represented in the unstably housed youth population in NYC. In their 2020 annual report, the Office of Children and Family Services reported that Black and Latinx youth accounted for 72% of youth entering crisis services programs and 90% of youth entering Transitional Independent Living Programs (OCFS, 2020). In the 2021 NYC Youth Count, 53% of the youth reporting unsheltered or unstable housing identified as LGBTQ, and 12% of youth identified as transgender/gender non-binary (HUD, 2022). Lastly, it is important to note that the vast majority of youth entering Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) programs in NYC were 18 years of age and older (OCFS, 2020).

Service Needs and Utilization

The demographic composition of youth served by RHY programs has important implications for service delivery. Youth experiencing unstable housing present at RHY programs with complex histories and require a variety of approaches and services to best fit their needs (Semborski, Redline, Rhoades, & Henwood, 2020). Youth navigate unstable housing and homelessness in multiple ways, often cycling in and out of shelters, couch surfing, sleeping in public spaces, and returning to family members even if it is not safe for them. Access to shelter is one of the primary requests for youth utilizing RHY programs; however, youth may not be able to obtain or maintain a safe bed in RHY programming. Studies have found that LGBT+ youth and youth of color are more likely to couch surf or sleep outside than stay in a shelter due to lack of culturally competent shelters and prior negative experience with service providers and peers (Petry, Hill, Milburn, & Rice, 2022).

Accessing services is the most important first step in transitioning out of homelessness; therefore, it is essential that RHY programs are able to engage youth and remain a source of support. While youth accessing services report multiple needs such as emergency shelter, transitional housing, supportive housing, case management, counseling, and medical assistance, they often don't take advantage of all the services and resources RHY programs have to offer (Prock & Kennedy, 2020). Youth are more likely to access services to take care of their basic

needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and may not engage in longer-term services such as case management and counseling because of lack of knowledge of the services available at the agency and distrust of service providers (Kort-Butler & Tyler, 2012; Yoshioka-Maxwell, 2022). Some youth may initially participate in longer-term services, but disengage before completing services due to transportation issues, punitive and unsupportive agency, shelter, and housing policies, long wait times for services, and lack of properly trained staff (Tan, et al., 2023).

Studies have shown that youth are more likely to stay connected to services when they are treated with respect and positive relationships (Ratliff et al, 2023). For transition aged youth with histories of trauma, homelessness, and mental health challenges accessing services, the most important thing for them was being treated with respect and understanding, and feeling a level of trust with the provider (McKormick, et al, 2023). Positive relationships with staff also contribute to feelings of safety in service provision, particularly for LGBT+ individuals who report feeling less safe in service settings than their cisgender, heterosexual peers (DiGuseppi, et al., 2022).

Vulnerability to Human Trafficking

Traffickers rely on exploiting individuals who have experienced difficult life circumstances, such as homelessness, poverty, abuse, and neglect. Young people experiencing homelessness, and/or are in foster care, are at particularly high risk for both labor and sexual exploitation. Many unstably housed youth have experienced physical and sexual abuse prior to and during homelessness, and youth who experience child physical and sexual abuse are more likely to be victimized while homeless than those who did not experience abuse (Tyler & Schmitz, 2018; Tyler & Ray, 2019). Unstably housed youth frequently have a history of multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Youth with greater instances of ACEs are more vulnerable to human trafficking (Middleton, et al., 2024). Youth may engage in unsafe behaviors to have their needs met, such as having sex in exchange for food and a place to stay or running drugs to earn money, making them vulnerable to further exploitation (Dank, et al., 2015; Murphy, 2016). In addition, youth who come from unstable and abusive homes often do not have the developmental skills for their age or for navigating complicated systems such as those necessary for obtaining and maintaining affordable housing; thus, engagement in service provision is highly beneficial for transitioning into a stable, safe, and healthy adulthood.

Purpose of This Study

Given the challenges of youth accessing services and service providers engaging those who do seek assistance, youth may decide to sleep unsheltered, stay with unsafe individuals, or enter precarious situations to meet their basic needs, increasing their vulnerability to exploitation and trafficking.

The purpose of this study is to learn from unstably housed youth which services would be most helpful to better connect them to services that best fit their needs, thereby decreasing vulnerability to trafficking.

2. Methodology

This study is an integral part of a larger research initiative targeting the disruption of human trafficking networks in NYC by improving the accessibility of housing and support services for unstably housed youth. A diverse team of data scientists, operations researchers, and human trafficking experts from New York University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and Northeastern University lead the project. The initiative is supported by an award from the National Science Foundation: “ISN2: Disrupting Human Trafficking via Needs Matching and Capacity Expansion” [Grant No. 1935602].

In addition, the study benefits from the diverse perspectives provided by an advisory board. This board is composed of unstably housed youth, survivors of trafficking, government stakeholders, and service providers, each bringing invaluable insights and experiences. Their guidance ensured that the research is grounded in reality and is aligned with the multifaceted nature of the issue at hand.

Research Objectives

The overarching goal of the study is to reduce the number of potential human trafficking victims in NYC by improving unstably housed youth’s access to housing and support resources. We subdivided our goal into four key objectives:

- 01** To gain a deeper understanding of the housing and support service needs and wants of unstably housed youth in NYC.
- 02** To evaluate the existing availability, capacity, and types of housing and support services.
- 03** To estimate the most cost-effective capacity required to meet the collective needs of unstably housed youth in NYC.
- 04** To identify an over-time, strategic plan for capacity deployment that optimizes the societal benefit-to-cost ratio.

This paper is focused on the first objective, delving into our methodology for survey design, data collection, and analysis. Further insights into Objectives 2, 3, and 4 are detailed in the [Appendix](#).

2.1. Survey Design and Structure

The survey, central to our study, was designed to gather comprehensive data on the needs and wants of unstably housed youth in NYC. While the primary objective was to understand the collective needs of these youth, we also aimed to discern potential patterns in youth's needs by examining their backgrounds and demographic details.

2.1.1. Survey Sections and Content

The survey was structured into seven focused sections. Below is an overview of the content of each section, the full survey is available in the [Appendix](#).



A: About You

Number of questions: 8

This section collects basic demographic information to understand the diverse backgrounds of the participants. It includes questions about:

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Parenthood Status



B: School and C: Place of Birth

Number of questions: 2, 7 respectively

These sections delve into the participants' educational backgrounds and their citizenship status, providing insights into their socio-economic backgrounds.



D: Housing

Number of questions: 5

This section probes into the current living situations of the participants. It asks about their sleeping arrangements, the duration of homelessness, and explores challenges such as substance abuse or mental health issues that might hinder access to housing resources.



E: Leaving Home

Number of questions: 4

In this section, participants share their stories about leaving home. Understanding these narratives helps us comprehend the nature of support they might lack and how it affects their housing needs.



F: Work

Number of questions: 9

This section seeks information regarding participants' work history, including any experiences of exploitation, abuse, or trafficking, using questions derived from a validated human trafficking screening tool (Dank et al. 2017).



G: Service Needs and Openness to Services

Number of questions: 54

This section explores the range of service needs of the youth, the frequency at which to receive the services, and their willingness to engage with these services. The survey specifically addresses 13 RHY support services:

- Mental health services
- Medical and dental care
- Substance abuse and alcohol treatment
- Crisis and 24-hour response services
- Long-term support housing and shelter services
- Legal assistance
- Service coordination
- Practical assistance
- Financial assistance
- Life skills training
- Employment assistance
- Educational assistance
- Childcare or parenting support

A detailed explanation of each service, along with the varying ways each service is offered, is available in the [Appendix](#).



J: Additional Questions about Desirable Shelter Features

Number of questions: 9

This section seeks information regarding participants' other preferences and needs regarding shelter features including: location, demographic-specific shelters, access to certain activities and offerings, etc.

2.1.2. Design Considerations

In designing the survey, we ensured that the questions were comprehensive, yet sensitive to the challenges faced by unstably housed youth. The survey aimed to capture a holistic view of their needs, both in terms of immediate support and long-term assistance, and their readiness to receive these services.

2.1.3. Finalizing the Survey through Collaborative Review

The development of our survey involved a rigorous review by our transdisciplinary team, focusing on creating a clear, understandable, and sensitive tool suitable for a diverse audience, particularly RHY. Initial feedback was sourced from Jamie Powlovich and Cole Giannone from New York Coalition for Homeless Youth which provided essential insights into the survey's relevance and approachability. To assess the survey's user-friendliness, gauge its completion time, and gather additional feedback, we conducted tests with approximately 100 industrial engineering undergraduate students from Northeastern University and Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Further refinement was achieved through the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). This board consists of eight youth with housing instability experience that were based in NYC at the time of the pilot. All of the youth received a stipend for participating on the YAB. Their firsthand experiences and feedback were crucial in fine-tuning the survey. This iterative process of consultation and modification was key to ensuring

the survey's effectiveness and resonance with its intended audience. To enhance inclusivity and reach a broader demographic, the survey was also translated into Spanish, catering to the needs of non-English speaking participants.

2.2. Data Collection

2.2.1. Initial Plan and Adjustments

Initially, our team aimed to survey 500 youth in NYC over a three-month period in 2020. The plan was to engage with young people at drop-in centers, crisis-emergency shelters, and through street outreach. This approach was designed to capture a comprehensive range of needs, targeting both youth already receiving services and those outside the current reach of the housing system.

However, the unforeseen challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated a significant adjustment in our methodology. Consequently, the data collection phase was extended over two years from December 2021 through June 2023, focusing exclusively on drop-in and crisis-emergency shelters.

2.2.2. Execution and Data Collection Team

Team members Meredith Dank and Andrea Hughes led the data gathering initiative. They successfully gathered data from 387 (384 included in final analysis) unstably housed youth across NYC, working closely with nine RHY programs. A detailed breakdown of this data collection is presented in [Figure 1](#) below. Additional information on the number of youth surveyed at different locations and their age distribution can be found in [Figure C1 in Appendix](#).

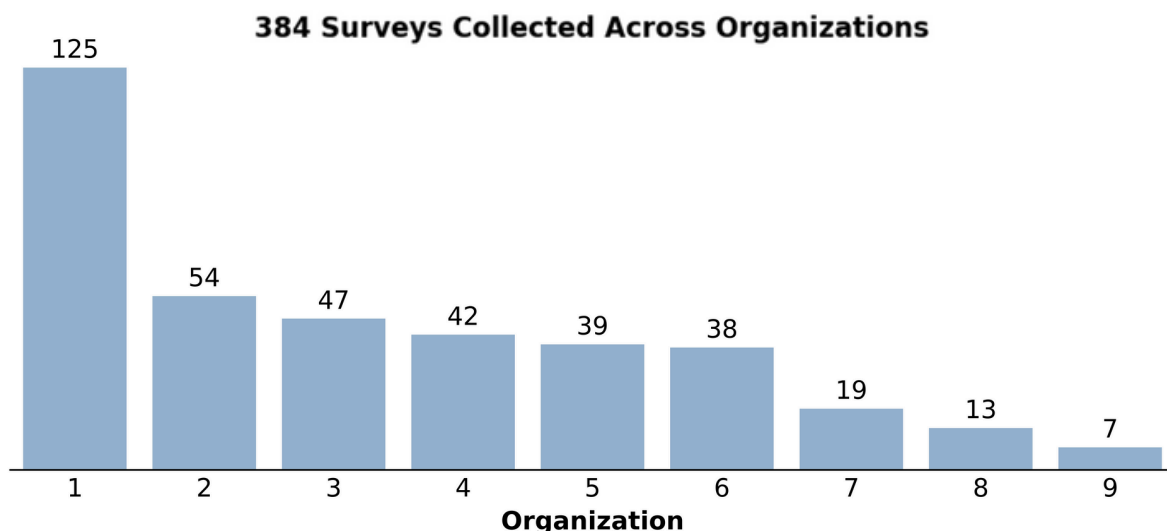


Figure 1: Distribution of the 384 surveys collected across 9 unique organizations.

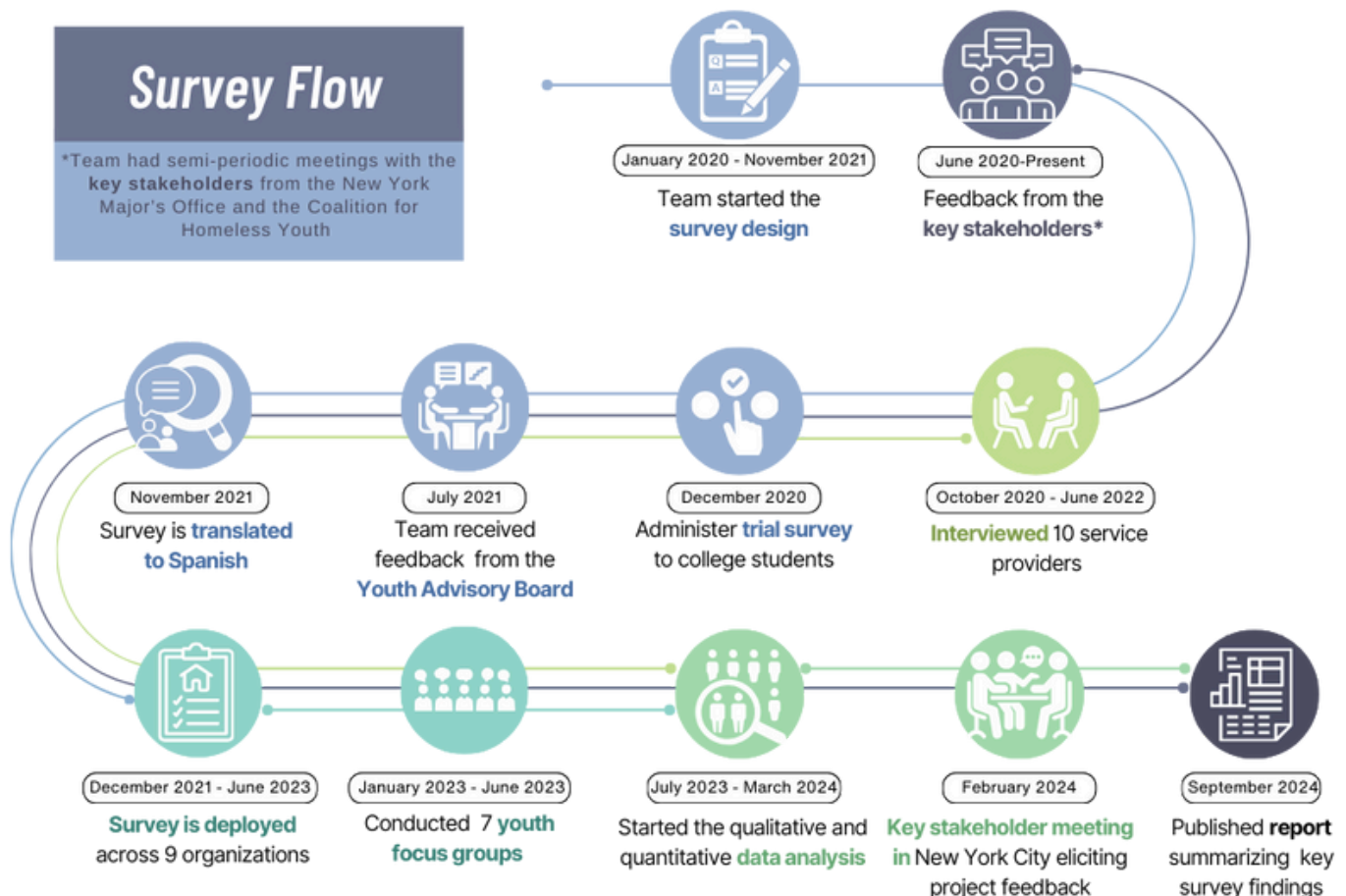
2.2.3. Survey Administration

The surveys were administered using electronic tablets equipped with the Qualtrics platform, facilitating an efficient and user-friendly data collection process. On average, each survey was completed within 19 minutes. In recognition of their valuable contribution, each participant surveyed was presented with a \$25 visa gift card as a token of our appreciation.

2.3. Qualitative Data Collection

In Spring and Summer of 2020, the research team conducted one-on-one interviews via zoom with ten runaway and homeless youth providers in NYC. The purpose of the interviews was to gain insights on both the needs of their clients as well as their needs as service providers, specifically around resources and programming. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was recorded with permission through Zoom. The interviews were also auto-transcribed by Zoom and checked for accuracy.

In addition to the service provider interviews, the research team conducted seven focus groups across four RHY programs with 35 runaway and homeless youth. Youth were identified by the RHY provider and received a \$50 visa gift card for participation. The youth were asked about their experiences working and/or trying to find work in NYC, their experiences receiving different types of services from RHY providers, and whether their needs were being met by these programs. The focus groups were voluntary, and youth could choose to not answer a question or stop participation at any time. The conversations lasted between 60-90 minutes and were recorded with permission on a recorder. The interviews were then transcribed by both NYU students and using Trint and checked for accuracy.



2.4. Data Analysis Approach

The initial step in the data analysis process involved examining missing values and skipped questions. Surveys that were blank or not fully completed by the youth were excluded (three surveys). The remaining 384 surveys were examined, seeking to identify any additional anomalies in responses. This process involved inspecting patterns such as skipping substantial sections of the survey, consistently providing the same answer to all questions and detecting inconsistencies in responses across related questions. No further anomalies could be confidently identified, leading to the preservation of all remaining surveys in the dataset. This decision was grounded in the understanding that the diverse range of lived experiences, needs, and self-reported survey responses suggests significant variations in behaviors across the dataset. Excluding additional surveys without sufficient evidence might inadvertently eliminate valuable insights into respondents' experiences and needs.

2.4.1. Descriptive Analysis

Following data preparation, an in-depth descriptive analysis was conducted, focusing on several crucial aspects:



Demographic Profiles

Examining the demographic characteristics of the survey participants to understand the composition of the study group.



Interest in Support Services

Identifying the specific support services that youth showed an interest in, crucial for future service development and allocation.



Influences on Service Preferences

Analyzing the factors and characteristics that shape youth preferences for services, offering insights into their diverse needs.



Preferred Locations for Services

Assessing where youth would like to receive services, information that is vital for planning and resource distribution.

2.4.2. Statistical Analysis

In addition to descriptive analysis, we conducted pairwise comparison statistical tests and chi-squared tests (see [Section 3.5](#)) to compare service preferences among different populations within our dataset. By doing so, we could draw more nuanced conclusions about the diverse needs and preferences among various subgroups of unhoused youth. This level of analysis is instrumental in developing targeted interventions and support strategies that are both effective and efficient. We used a two-sided z-test for pairwise comparisons and a two-sided chi-squared contingency test for comparisons involving more than two groups (e.g., age). No statistical tests were conducted for non-mutually exclusive groups (e.g., race/ethnicity).

3. Results

3.1. Demographics

NYC RHY programs serve young people ages 16 to 24, and provide services to a highly diverse population of youth. The demographic breakdown of participants for the present study reflects the diversity of young people seeking services in these programs.

3.1.1. General Demographic Information

The majority of study participants (65%) were ages 18 to 21, with 6% of participants reporting that they were under the age of 18. Over half of the youth (63%) identified as cis-gender, with 38% of the study participants identifying as cis-gender male. 13% of the young people identified as transgender and 10% as non-binary. Study participants were mostly evenly split between young people identifying as LGB+ (47%) and those identifying as heterosexual (48%). Almost half of the young people (42%) said they were of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and 65% of the young people identified as Black or African American. 10% of the young people identified as American Indian or Native Alaskan and 17% of study participants identified as White (see **Tables 1 - 3 and Figures 2 - 4**).

Age: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q2 How old are you?

AGE	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
16	7	1.8%
17	17	4.4%
18	56	14.6%
19	79	20.6%
20	75	19.5%
21	41	10.7%
22	22	5.7%
23	44	11.5%
24	42	10.9%
Unknown	1	0.3%

Table 1: Age breakdown of the 384 surveyed youth.

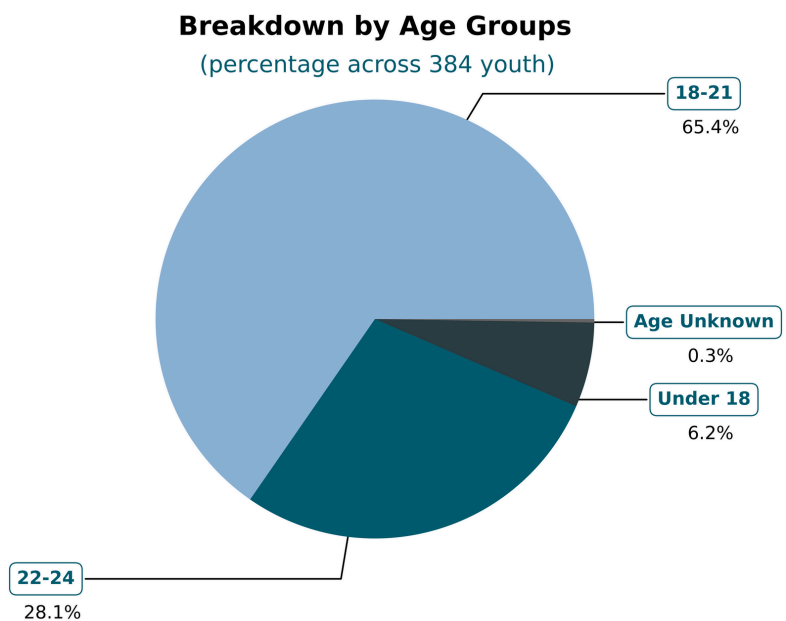


Figure 2: Proportion of each age group across the 384 surveyed youth.

Gender: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q3 How do you identify your gender?

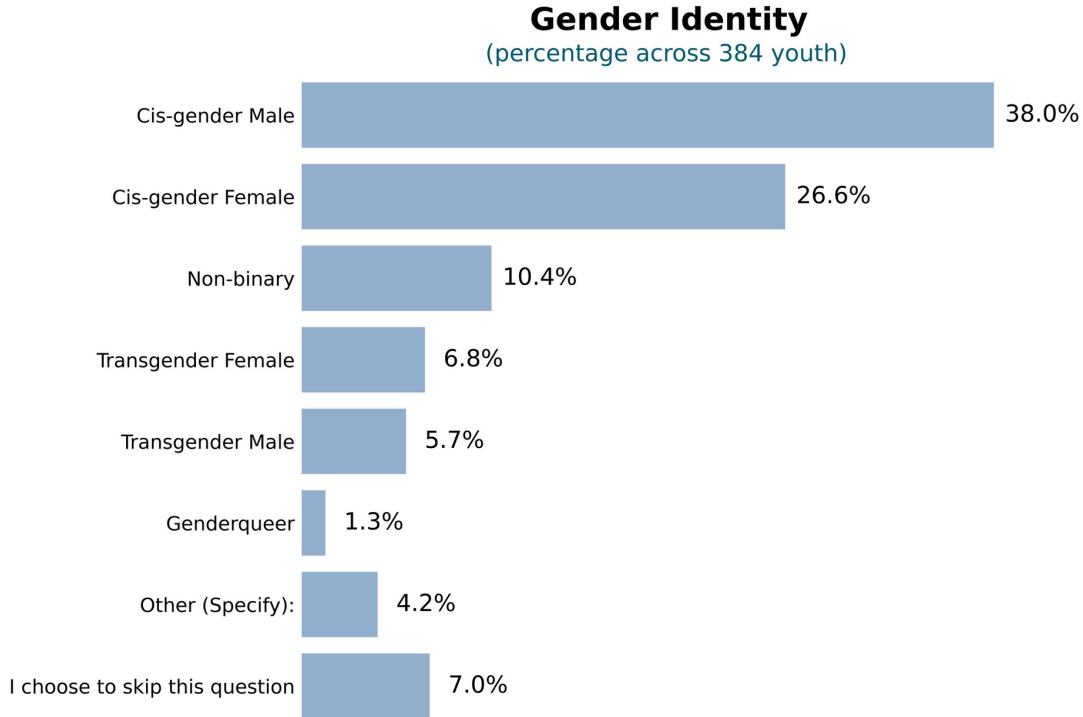


Figure 3: Gender Identity of the 384 surveyed youth.

(A detailed breakdown within each gender group can be found in [Table C1 in Appendix](#))

Other Category Responses: Bisexual ; Pan sexual ; Transmale and intersex; Straight ; Gay; Genderfluid; Bisexual; System Fluid; Agender; Transmasculine Non-Binary

Sexual Orientation: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q4 What is your sexual orientation?

Notes: Sexual orientation is displayed as two groups: heterosexual / straight and LGBT+ which includes : bisexual, pansexual, gay, queer, lesbian, asexual and questioning.

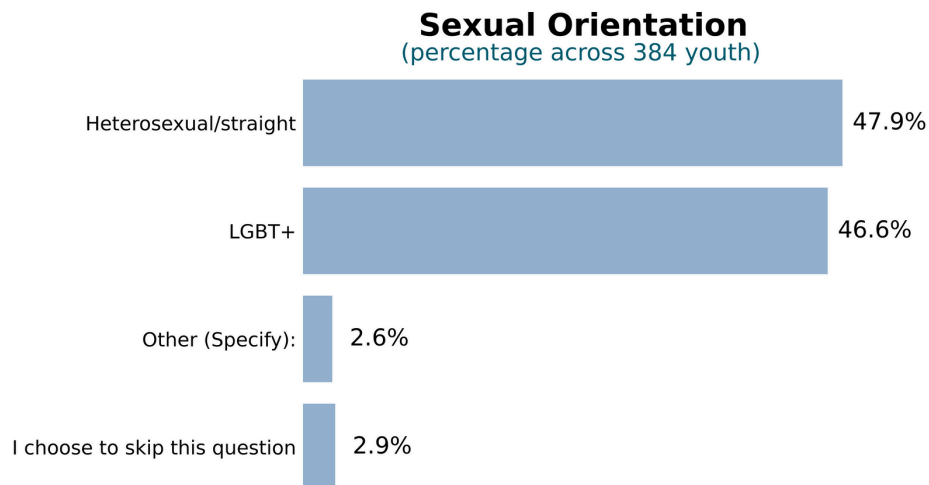


Figure 4: Sexual orientation of the 384 surveyed youth.

(A detailed breakdown of each sexual orientation can be found in [Table C2 of Appendix.](#))

Other Category Responses: Demisexual; Unlabeled; Demisexual; homoflexible; Omnisexual; Gay and queer; equally :)

Spanish / Latino: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q5 Are you Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin?

SPANISH / LATINO	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
No	205	53.4%
Yes	163	42.5%
I choose to skip this question	16	4.2%

Table 2: Hispanic, Latino and Spanish origin breakdown of the 384 surveyed youth.

Race: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q6 What is your race?

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

RACE/ ETHNICITY	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Black / African American	251	65.4%
Hispanic / Latino /Spanish	163	42.5%
White	64	16.7%
American Indian/Alaska native	37	9.6%
Asian	20	5.2%
Native Hawaiian/pacific islander	6	1.6%
Other (specify)	59	15.4%
I choose to skip this question	27	7.0%
Unanswered	2	0.5%

Table 3: Racial identity of the 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Mix; Irish and French; Middle eastern; Puerto Rican Cuban n irish; Afro-Caribbean ; European; All of the above; Latin and Caucasian ; Irish ; Bolivian ; Parisian and Italian ; Mixed; Haitian/ Italian; B/W; Latina/o ; Arab; Indio; Moreno; Indigenous; West Indies & Native American ; Brazilian; Puerto Rican Cuban irish; Haitian ; South Asian

3.1.2. Youth with Children

Few survey participants reported that they had children, or they or their partner were pregnant (12%). Of the participants who reported having or expecting children, the majority of them have one child or were expecting their first child (73%), and 13% have two children or were expecting their second child (see **Tables 4 and 5**).

Youth with Children: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q7 Do you have any children of your own, or are you or your partner currently pregnant?

CHILDREN	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
No	328	85.4%
Yes	45	11.7%
I choose to skip this question	9	2.3%
Unanswered	2	0.5%

Table 4: Youth with children across 384 surveyed youth.

Number of Children: Across 45 RHY answered "Yes" to Children

Survey Question: Q8 How many children do you have (including any that are yet to be born)?

Notes: Some youth indicated 'Yes' to having children (Q7) but reported the number of children they had as 0. Percentages are based on 45 youth.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
1	33	73.3%
2	6	13.3%
0	3	6.7%
4	1	2.2%
3	1	2.2%
Unanswered	1	2.2%

Table 5: Number of children across the 45 youth who answered "yes" to Q7.

3.1.3. Education

At the time of data collection, around 28% of the participants were enrolled in school, including college, and of those currently in school, 12% of the young people were attending high school. The majority of study participants (70%) were not currently attending any educational institution. Participants reported a range of educational attainment, with 36% of the young people reporting a high school diploma as their highest level of education obtained. 18% of the young people had not completed high school or obtained a GED. Around 14% of study participants have attended or are currently attending college, and 2% said they have completed a bachelor's degree or higher (see [Table 6 and Figure 5](#)).

Currently in School: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q9 Are you currently in school?

CURRENTLY IN SCHOOL	COUNT	PERCENTAGES
No	267	69.5%
Yes	106	27.6%
I choose to skip this question	9	2.3%
Unanswered	2	0.5%

Table 6: School status of the 384 surveyed youth.

Highest Level of Education: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q10 What is the highest level of education you have finished?

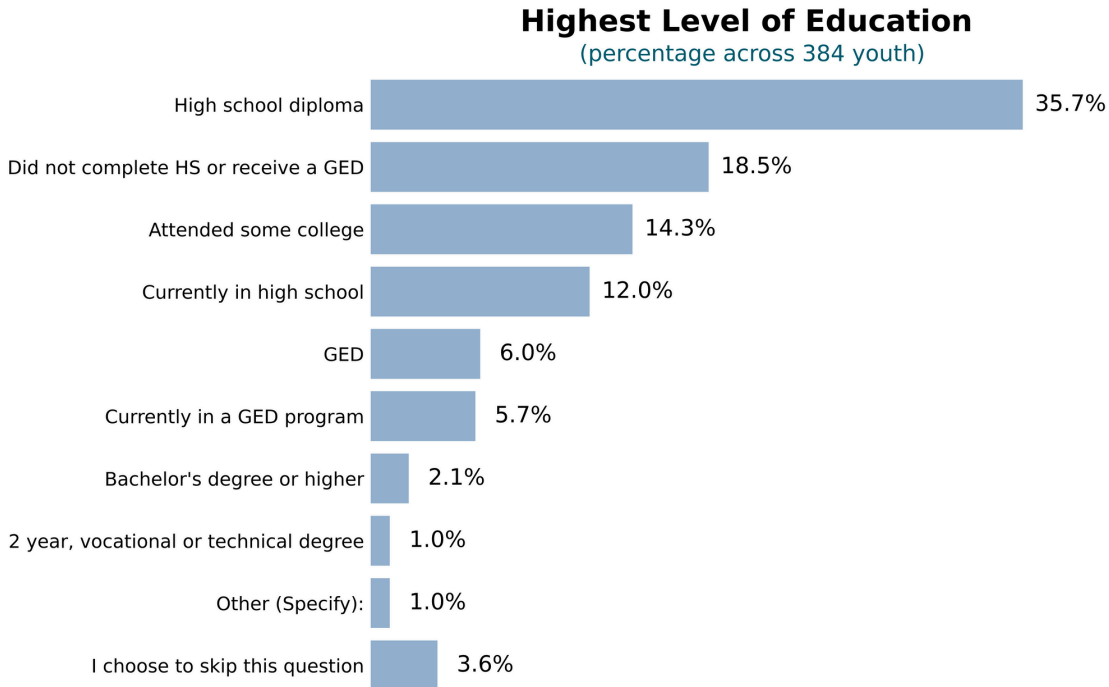


Figure 5: Highest level of education of the 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: -99; 10th grade; I have a semester left but couldnt attend due to homelessness. I will be attending summer school;10th Grade

3.1.4. Where Participants Grew Up

NYC youth programs are often known as an option for RHY in other areas of the country and for young people who migrate to the United States in search of safety and a better life. To better understand the young people accessing programs and the potential services they may need, study participants were asked a series of questions regarding where they grew up and their legal status. The majority of participants (83%) said they were born in the United States and 77% of the participants said they grew up in the United States. Of the young people who grew up in the United States, 78% of them grew up in a Northeast state and 13% in a Southeast state. Of the youth who said they grew up in New York (64%), the vast majority grew up in NYC (91%), with 35% from the Bronx and 30% from Brooklyn.

Of the young people who said they were not born in the United States (15%), over half (53%) had legal permanent residence status. Study participants who were born in another country reported coming from a variety of countries, with Honduras (18%) and Venezuela (18%) as the most prevalent (see [Tables 7-10](#) and [Figures 6 and 7](#)).

Grew Up in the United States: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q11 Did you grow up in the United States?*

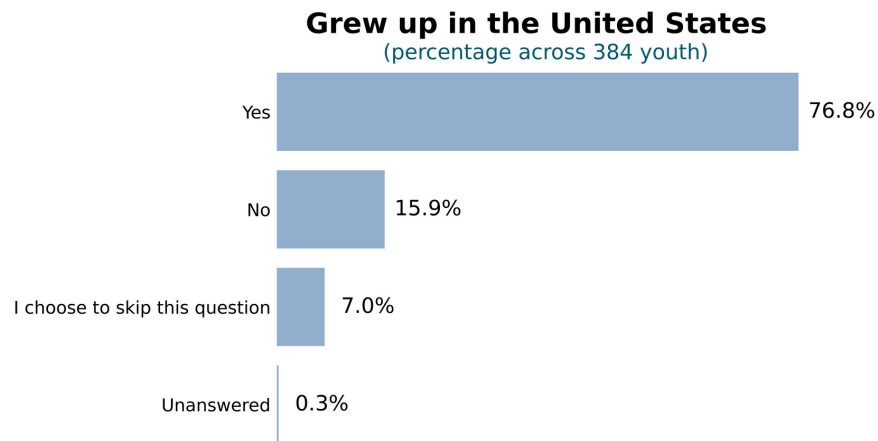


Figure 6: Youth who grew up in the United States across 384 surveyed youth.

State Grew Up In: Across 295 RHY, who grew up in the United States

Survey Question: Q309 What state did you grow up in?*

Notes: Percentages are out of the 295 youth who grew up in the United States. Each state is categorized into their respective regions: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, West and Southwest.

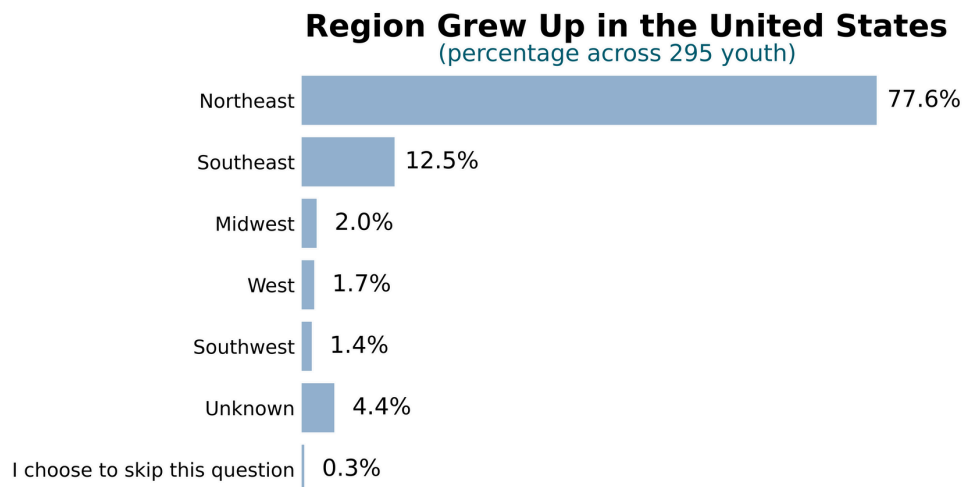


Figure 7: Region youth grew up in across 295 youth who grew up in the United States. (A detailed breakdown of each state can be found in [Table C3 of Appendix.](#))

Grew up in NYC: Across 190 RHY who grew up in New York

Survey Question: Q310 Did you grow up in New York City (NYC)?*

Notes: Percentages are out of 190 youth who grew up in New York state.

GREW UP IN NYC	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Yes	173	91.1%
No	14	7.8%
I choose to skip this question	3	1.6%

Table 7: Youth who grew up in NYC across 190 youth who grew up in New York state.

*If you were raised in more than one place, please select the place you spent the most time.

NYC Borough Grew Up In: Across 173 RHY who grew up in NYC

Survey Question: Q311 Which Borough did you grow up in?*

Notes: Percentages are out of 173 youth who grew up in NYC.

WHICH NYC BOROUGH GREW UP IN	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
The Bronx	61	35.3%
Brooklyn	51	29.5%
Queens	32	18.5%
Manhattan	15	8.7%
Staten Island	9	5.2%
I choose to skip this question	4	2.3%
Unanswered	1	0.6%

Table 8: Borough youth grew up in across 173 youth who grew up in NYC.

Born in the United States: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q12 Were you born in the United States?

Notes: Where youth were born may not be the same place they identify growing up in

BORN IN UNITED STATES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Yes	319	83.1%
No	58	15.1%
I choose to skip this question	7	1.8%

Table 9: Youth who were born in the United States.

Legal Status in the United States: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q12 Were you born in the United States? and Q13 Are you a United States citizen or lawful permanent resident (with a green card)?

Notes: Combines the United States citizen status (Q12) and legal permanent resident status (Q13) survey responses.

LEGAL STATUS	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
United States born citizen	319	83.1%
Legal or permanent resident	32	8.3%
Not a legal or permanent resident	28	7.3%
I choose to skip this question	4	1.0%
Unanswered	1	0.3%

Table 10: United States legal status across 384 surveyed youth.

3.2. Youth History

3.2.1. History of Homelessness

The study participants reported varied experiences of housing instability. A significant portion of young people (38%) have experienced homelessness for more than 1 year over their lifetime and 15% have experienced homelessness between 6 months and a year. Some participants indicated shorter periods of experiencing homelessness in their lifetime with some individuals experiencing homelessness between one to six months (16%), and 8% between one week and one month (**Figure 8**).

Similar to lifetime experiences, 33% of study participants said they are currently experiencing homelessness for more than 1 year. Other responses to the current length of time experiencing homelessness also reflected similar durations of homelessness as those reported throughout their lifetime. For example, 15% of young people said they have currently been homeless between 6 months and a year, which is the same percentage of young people saying that is the length of time they experienced homelessness throughout their lifetime (**Figure 9**). It should be noted that this does not necessarily mean youth who have currently been homeless between 6 months and a year are the same as those who have experienced homelessness between 6 months and a year throughout their lifetime.

Time Homeless Over Life: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q292 Over the course of your life, how long have you been homeless or unstably housed?

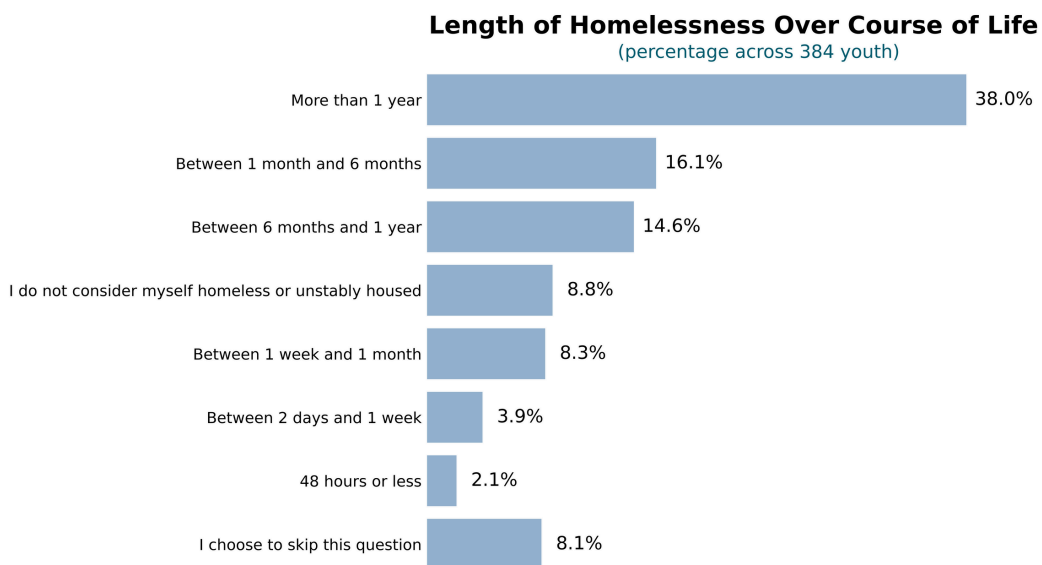


Figure 8: Length of experience with homelessness over course of life across 384 surveyed youth.

The similarities in youth reported lifetime and current length of time experiencing homelessness may reflect the difficulty of quantifying time spent in various living arrangements and cycling between stable and unstable housing. When asked where participants slept most nights over the past month, the most common location was at a shelter (32%); 62% were staying elsewhere. Some youth stayed with family or those within their network, with 20% sleeping in houses or

apartments with family members, and 8% temporarily staying with friends or couch surfing. Other locations youth were sleeping included transitional housing programs (11%), staying in group homes (4%), and sleeping outside in parks or streets (2%) (**Figure 10**).

Current Time Homeless: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q312 Currently, how long have you been unstably housed?

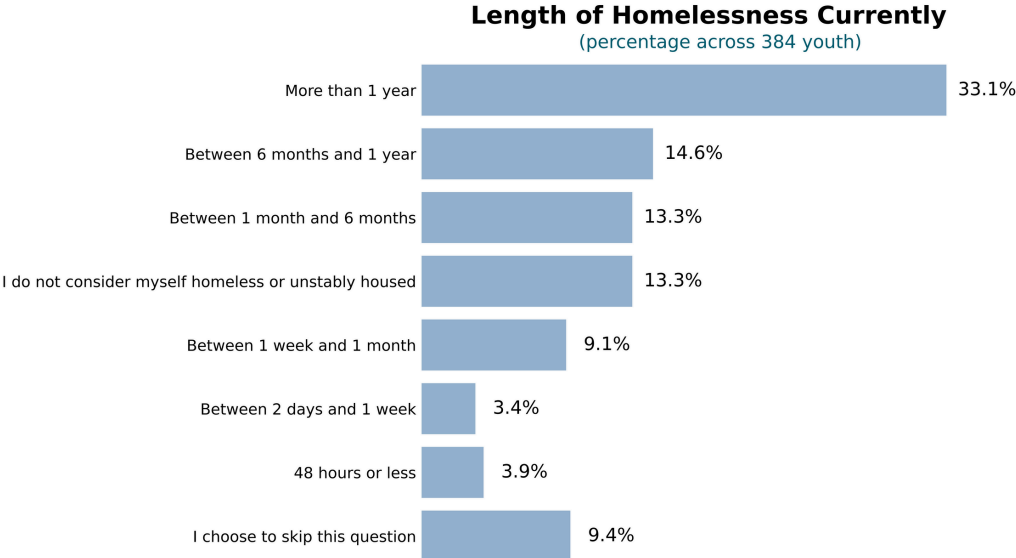


Figure 9: Length of current homelessness experience across 384 surveyed youth.

Where Slept Past Month: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q14 Over the past month, where did you sleep most nights?

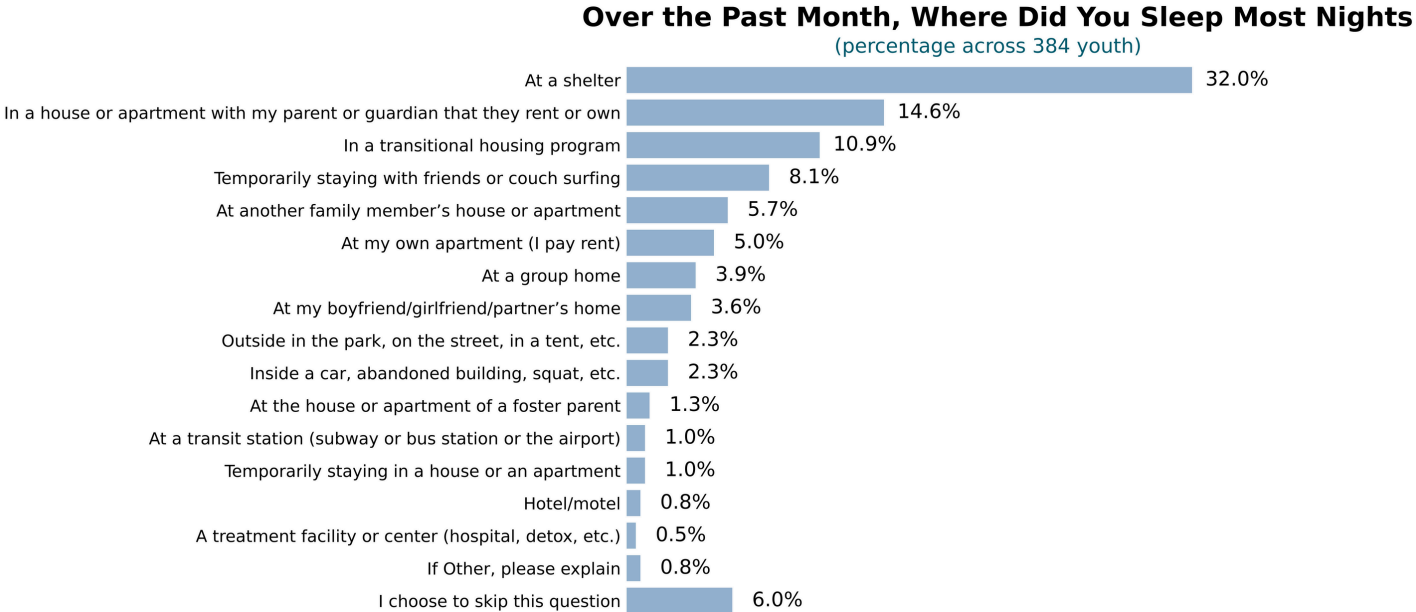


Figure 10: Location youth slept most nights in the past month across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Other Category Responses: -99; Couch surfing and shelter

3.2.2. Childhood History

To better understand the circumstances related to young people experiencing unstable housing and their family dynamics, participants answered several questions around the conditions in which they left their family homes. A significant proportion of youth (54%) have experienced running away from their parent or guardian's home. Youth reported running away from home primarily due to emotional abuse (37%), conflicts with parents or guardians (29%), and physical abuse (27%) (see **Table 11 and Figure 11**).

Ran Away from Guardian: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q18 Have you ever run away from your parent / guardian's home?

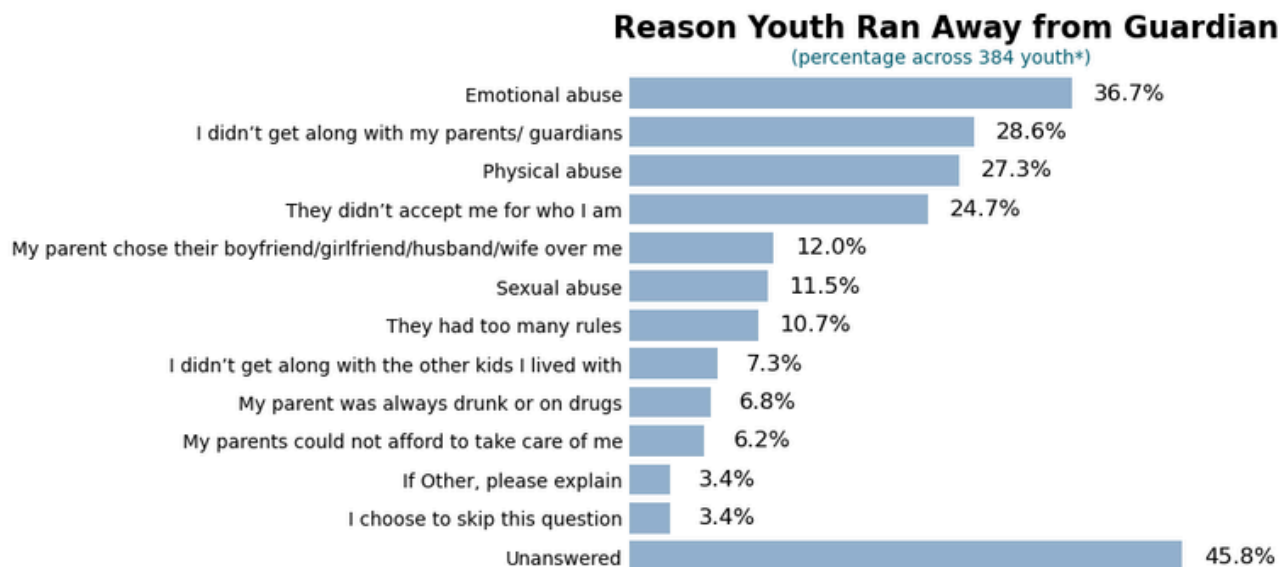
RAN AWAY FROM GUARDIAN	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Yes	208	54.2%
No	158	41.2%
I choose to skip this question	15	3.9%
Unanswered	3	0.8%

Table 11: Experience running away from parent or guardian across 384 surveyed youth.

Reason Youth Ran Away from Guardian: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q19 Why did you run away? Please check all that apply.

Notes: Youth may select more than one response, resulting in a total of 862 responses across categories. Percentages are based on 384 unique youth, therefore the total percentages may exceed 100%.



* Percentages may not sum to 100% as youth can select more than one response

Figure 11: Reasons youth ran away from parent or guardian across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Hoarding; Mom was dying in front of me slowly ;No rules!; Just felt like a burden; Let over money bet over a game; Foster Homes; Domestic violence ; Being blame on stuff I had nothing to do with; Fighting with my brother and he kicked me out of my mom house

Over half of the youth (59%) said they have been kicked out of their homes by their parents or guardians. Reasons for being kicked out include parental rejection (23%), failure to comply with rules (22%), and parental prioritization of romantic relationships over their child's well-being (16%). It is important to note that 23% of the youth who had run away from home also did so due to parents/guardians not accepting them for who they were (see **Table 12 and Figure 12**). These findings were reflected in the focus groups, with several participants sharing that they left home because of family rejection due to their gender or sexual orientation.

Kicked Out by Guardian: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q20 Have you ever been kicked out of your home by your parent / guardian?

KICKED OUT BY GUARDIAN HOME	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Yes	226	58.9%
No	128	33.3%
I choose to skip this question	23	6.0%
Unanswered	7	1.8%

Table 12: Experience being kicked out by parent or guardian across 384 surveyed youth.

Reason Youth Got Kicked Out by Guardian: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q21 Why did your parent or guardian throw you out or kick you out? Please check all that apply.

Notes: Youth may select more than one response, resulting in a total of 531 responses across categories. Percentages are based on 384 unique youth, therefore the total percentages may exceed 100%.

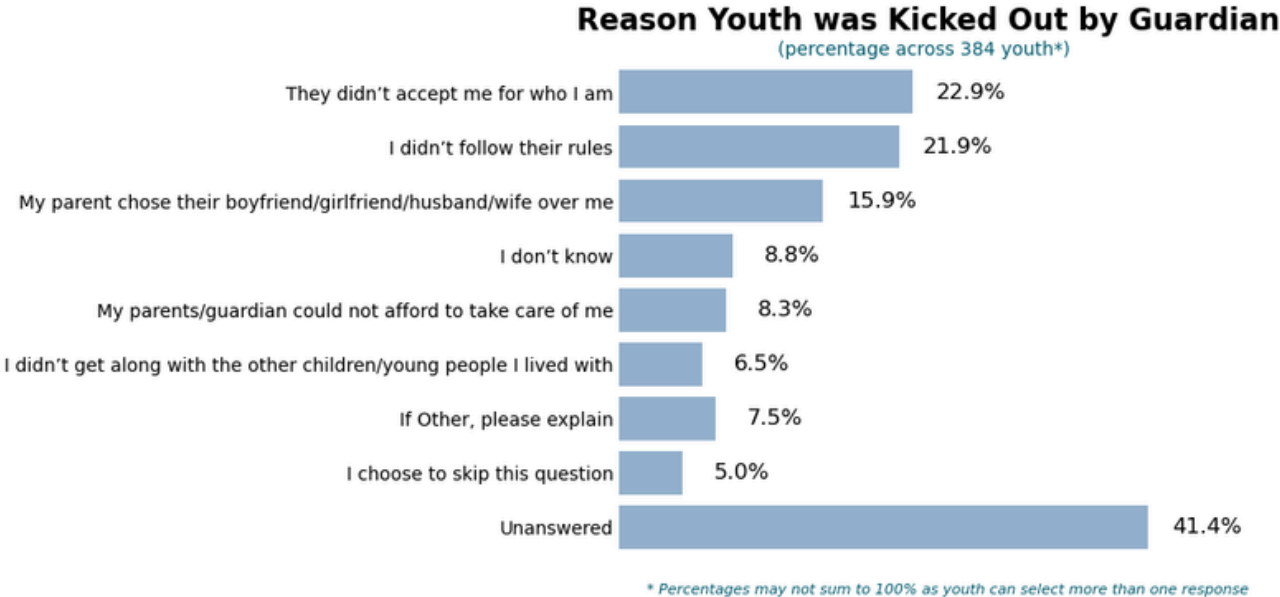


Figure 12: Reasons youth got kicked out by parent/guardian across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Altercation; My mother never actually loved me...; Rent; Playing my guitar for too loud; Fighting and arguing; No work and didnt pass boot campus; Grow up find your own; Toxic household; mother mentally abusive; Favoritisms; ... I had a kid.; Tried to control me and I wouldn't allow it; Mental Health Reasons; Verbal abuse; I stayed with my husband for 2night they it seems like you have a place to stay so ask can you stay with him; Abuse; I was 18; Mom didnt like me; My mother is an alcoholic and very erratic. She kicked me out at the advice of her friend.; Me and my brother were fighting because he called my ex girlfriend a bitch; Unable to get along with my mother; Violence; Trauma/abuse; My mother was abusive and literally tortured me.; Due to mental illnes

3.2.3. Work History

When asked if participants had ever worked before, 52% of youth said “yes” and 37% said they have never worked. Examining individuals with a work history based on age revealed that 65% of those aged 22-24, 45% of individuals aged 18-21, and 62.25% of those under the age of 18 had employment experience (**Table 13**). It is unclear if those who don’t have employment experience haven’t worked because they are unable to find a job. Many focus group participants expressed difficulties finding employment due to the NYC job market, their young age, and their unstable housing situation. Some participants described applying to numerous employment advertisements without receiving a response. One young person shared their frustration:

“It’s a little, I feel like they discriminate specifically towards the age thing more because it’s like ok you’re 17, and then on top of that, and it’s another layer, it’s like AND you’re homeless. It’s like ‘What are you going to do for me?’ It adds to it, it’s like you’re this 17 year old kid, you’re kind of seen as this rebel that just left home and now you’re asking for a job, like you’re just sitting in someone’s face and it’s really disheartening and it’s really hard to ask for help when you’re constantly seen as this rogue person that just left when you could have just went with the standard when that’s just not how life works.”

[Focus Group 1]

Survey participants who had work experience, were often employed in unstable, part-time, low-wage jobs. 56% of the young people said they worked in the restaurant industry, 31% worked in retail, and 14% did some form of office work. Focus group participants who were either working or had worked in the past also spoke of having a series of low paying jobs where they were never earning enough to meet their needs. In alignment with the survey results, many participants had experience working in the fast food and restaurant industry and retail. One participant described their employment history saying, ***“I was more of a customer service kind of person, so retail, fast food industry”*** **[Focus Group 2]**. Other participants had experience working in delivery, door-to-door sales, and social services.

In addition to formal employment, young people engaged in the informal economy as a way to earn money (**Table 14**). 23% of the participants said they earned money babysitting, and 15% said they traded sex. Young people also reported providing services such as cleaning homes (16%), and mowing lawns and shoveling sidewalks (14%); however, it is unclear if these were informal arrangements or they were working for a company. Focus group participants shared similar experiences and described working jobs where they were paid under-the-table, and a few participants disclosed that they engaged in sex work.

The 384 survey participants indicated working in multiple types of jobs, as there were almost 1000 responses across the work type categories. This data reflects

young people frequently changing employment and/or having multiple jobs at once. A couple focus group participants who had full time formal employment also worked other informal jobs because they weren't making enough money to support themselves with their formal employment. One participant said, ***"I will work off the books jobs because I have some friends, some family friends they do construction and they also move furniture so sometimes I'll ask if I can get a couple days and they'll give me 1, 2 days sometimes"*** [Focus Group 3]. Another participant had a formal job prior to experiencing unstable housing, and found they had to take on other work after becoming homeless:

"So before I was homeless I had already had that income so I was already ok and then I kind of held onto that job the whole time so that's the job I'm working now. And now that I'm homeless I've noticed that that income hasn't been enough and I've had to work jobs under the table or other side jobs as well or if I want to do, I've noticed that even if I want to do an educational opportunity it has to come attached with some sort of financial aspect because I can't make it to school if I'm not able to eat."

[Focus Group 1]

Ever Work: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q22 Have you ever done any kind of work/other activity for something in return from an employer, relative, friend, or stranger? This could mean that you received money, food, housing, drugs, or anything else. Remember: "Work/other activity" can be something like being a server at a restaurant or working at a store or something like selling drugs or trading sex. This could include doing it for someone even though you didn't want to. Thinking about all types of "work" above, have you ever done work for someone?

EVER WORK	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Yes	201	52.3%
No	141	36.7%
I choose to skip this question	41	10.7%
Unanswered	1	0.3%

Table 13: Work experience across 384 surveyed youth.

Type of Work: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q23 Which of the following kinds of work have you ever done for someone, keeping in mind that by "work" we mean anything you did to get money or something of value—including food, clothes, a place to stay, protection, drugs, or gifts—for yourself (or your family).

Notes: Youth may select more than one response, resulting in a total of 993 responses across categories. Percentages are based on 384 unique youth; therefore, they may not sum to 100.

TYPE OF WORK	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Formal economy	283	73.7%
Informal economy	82	21.4%
I choose to skip this question	68	17.7%
If other, please explain	35	9.1%
Unanswered	1	0.3%

Table 14: Forms of work experience across 384 surveyed youth. A detailed breakdown within each economy group can be found in **Table C4 of Appendix**.

Other Category Responses: NGO work; Home health aid; Selling drugs; other trade; Art; Dogsitting ; Anything; Golf course ; Was repeatedly sexually assaulted by someone I was staying with whilst homeless, but never said anything in fear of being forced to leave with nowhere to go; No of the above ; Started a Business ; I was a janitor ; Security guard; Tarot readings; Pescador; Enpacador en los super mercados; Amazon; Gym machine (leather) work; Online business ecommerce ; Green job;Library ; Stuff ; Non; Military; lifting stuff around ; Internship; Internships; Commission Artwork; No; Artwork

The types of work attributed to the formal and informal economy are listed below respectively.

Formal economy: Working in a retail store (clothing store, grocery store, convenience store, at the mall, etc.); Office work (answering phones, filing, etc.); Serving food in a restaurant or café; Another type of job in a restaurant or café; Delivering newspapers, restaurant food, groceries or other things to other peoples homes; Babysitting; Cleaning homes; Doing construction work or other home repairs (painting, plumbing, electricity, etc.); Doing nails or braiding hair; Mowing lawns, shoveling sidewalks, or other yard work; Selling items door-to-door; Stripping

Informal Economy: Asking for change or donations on the street or in the subway; Trading sex for money, clothes, shelter, or other things; Selling items, dancing, or performing on the street or in the subways; Participating in sexual videos or photos for money, clothes, shelter, or other things

3.2.4. Sex and Labor Trafficking Experiences

Young people who are experiencing unstable housing may be particularly vulnerable to labor exploitation and human trafficking. Study participants were asked a series of validated human trafficking screening questions specific to child welfare involved youth and RHY (Dank et al. 2017) to learn about any work experiences they have had that may indicate exploitative labor practices and human trafficking. Participants were asked the following survey questions:

Human Trafficking Screening Question

Q24	Have you ever been unable to leave a place you worked or talk to people you wanted to talk to, even when you weren't working, because the person you worked for threatened or controlled you?
Q25	Did someone you work for ever refuse to pay what they promised and keep all or most of the money you made?
Q26	Were you ever physically beaten, slapped, hit, kicked, punched, burned or harmed in any way by someone you work for?
Q28	Did someone you work for ever ask, pressure, or force you to do something sexually that you did not feel comfortable doing?
Q29	Did someone you work for ever force you to engage in sexual acts with family, friends, clients, or business associates for money or favors?
Q30	Did you ever trade sexual acts for food, clothing, money, shelter, favors, or other necessities for survival before you reached the age of 18?

Almost half of the youth surveyed (46%) said they experienced at least one of the human trafficking indicators at work; 22% of the 384 youth had experienced one indicator and 10% had experienced two. Of those who had reported at least one indicator, 32% had experienced three or more (see *Figures 13-15*).

Percentage of 384 RHY Surveys with at Least One Potential Instance of Trafficking Experience Identified
(percentage across 384 youth)

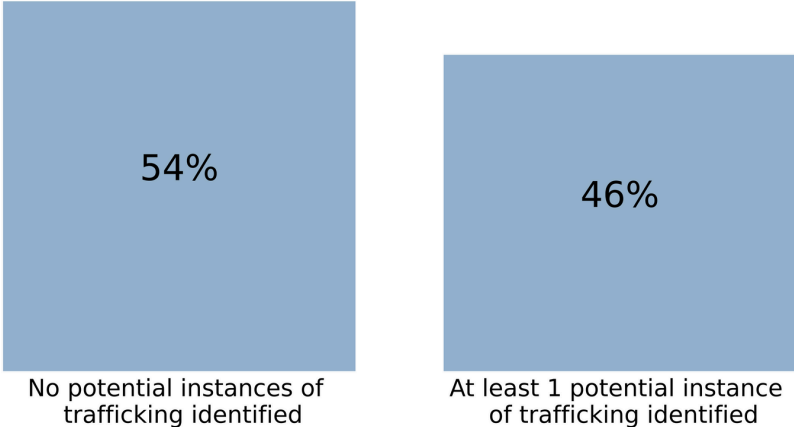


Figure 13: Breakdown of youth with at least one potential instance of trafficking identified across 384 surveyed youth.

The most common exploitative experience youth reported was someone they worked for refusing to pay what they promised and kept all or most of the money the youth made (28%). Youth also expressed being threatened or controlled at work (17%), and some shared they had experienced physical abuse (16%). Focus group participants also spoke of a variety of negative work experiences, primarily around wage related issues. Youth described employers having questionable operating practices that left them struggling to obtain their full pay. A few participants were doing a significant amount of work on a volunteer basis and wondered whether they were being taken advantage of and should be paid. Some participants spoke of unpaid internships and how they were expected to accept the lack of pay because they are “gaining experience”.

Several participants shared that they didn’t get their final pay after either quitting their jobs or being laid off. One participant described being exploited by a large fast-food chain,

“[I] worked at a [NAME] under the table, made me manager, had me doing clopeners [close and open sequential shifts] for less than minimum wage...”

[Focus Group 2]



One youth without legal status spoke of feeling trapped in exploitative employment because they had no other options available to them:

“[the jobs were] not really dangerous but more like they were exploitative, so you feel that you can’t take any more, you can’t take it but what do you do? I have to do it, think of the family, think of this thing or think of something else so you don’t have another option.”

[Focus Group 4]



Survey participants also reported being exploited for sex and indicators for risk of sex trafficking. 15% of the youth said that someone they worked for asked, pressured, or forced them to do something sexually they didn’t feel comfortable doing, 11% said someone they worked for forced them to engage in sexual acts with family, friends, clients, or business associates for money or favors, and 18% said they traded sexual acts for food, clothing, money, shelter, favors, or other necessities for survival before the age of 18. While some focus group participants spoke of working in environments where sexual harassment was common, they would often leave the job in response. A few focus group participants shared that they have engaged in sex work to earn money, with one participant saying they did so until they were able to access more stable housing,

“I did sex work for about a period in my life before I got into my apartment but that was right before a couple TILs I went to.”

[Focus Group 2]



HT Related Questions: Across 384 RHY

Survey Questions: Q24, Q25, Q26, Q28, Q29, Q30

Notes: Percentages for each question are based on 384 unique youth.

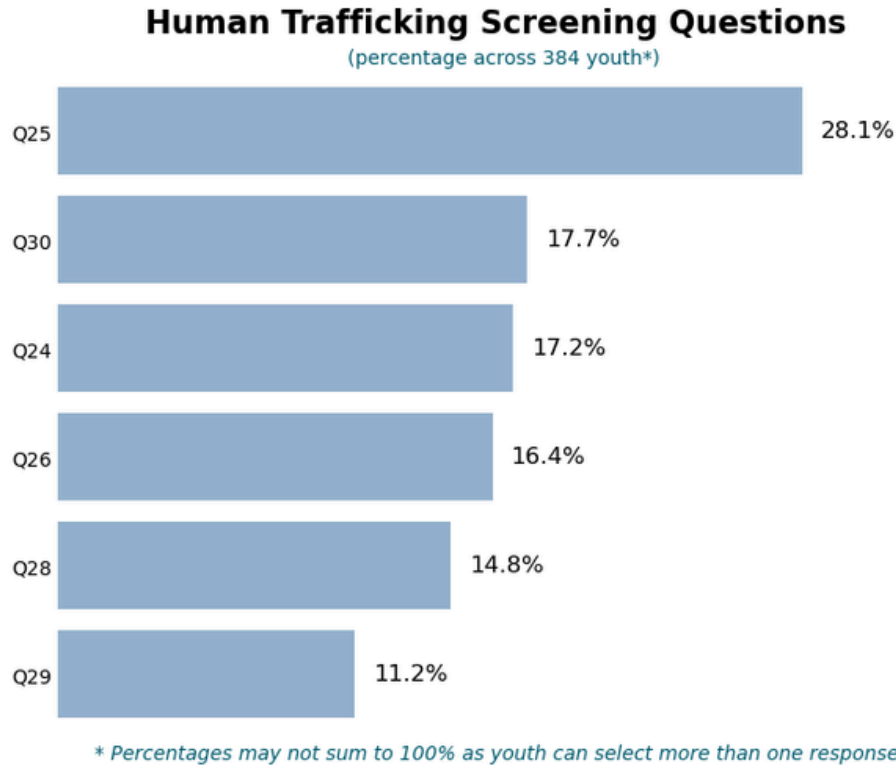


Figure 14: Breakdown of human trafficking screening questions identified across 384 surveyed youth.

Number of Human Trafficking Indicators: Across 384 RHY

Survey Questions: Total number of human trafficking questions identified by each youth (Q24, Q25, Q26, Q28, Q29, Q30)

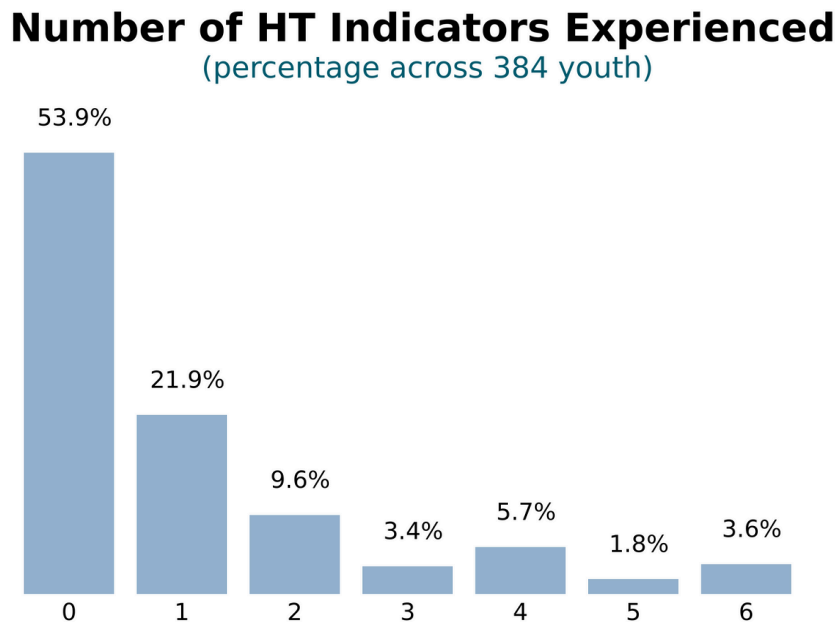


Figure 15: Number of human trafficking screening questions identified per youth across 384 surveyed youth.

3.2.5. Mental Health History

To further understand additional challenges youth are experiencing that could impact their ability to obtain and maintain stable housing and employment, survey participants were asked about any mental health conditions and physical disabilities with which they had been diagnosed. A high percentage of youth said they received depression related diagnoses (54%), anxiety related diagnoses (58%), as well as diagnosis of PTSD (37%). Over half of the young people (57%) reported that they had received a neurodevelopmental related diagnosis, with 32% of the young people saying they had received an ADHD diagnosis, 6% an autism spectrum diagnosis, and 19% a learning disability diagnosis. In addition, youth reported receiving bipolar related diagnoses (25%), and schizophrenia related diagnoses (7%). Lastly, 7% of the youth reported receiving a physical disability related diagnosis and traumatic brain injury (2%). Over 62% of all youth reported having 2 or more of these mental health conditions (see **Figure 16**).

Mental Health Diagnosis: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q17 Sometimes health or mental health conditions can affect our ability to find a safe place to live, stay in school, or find a job. Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following (see **Table C5 in Appendix**)

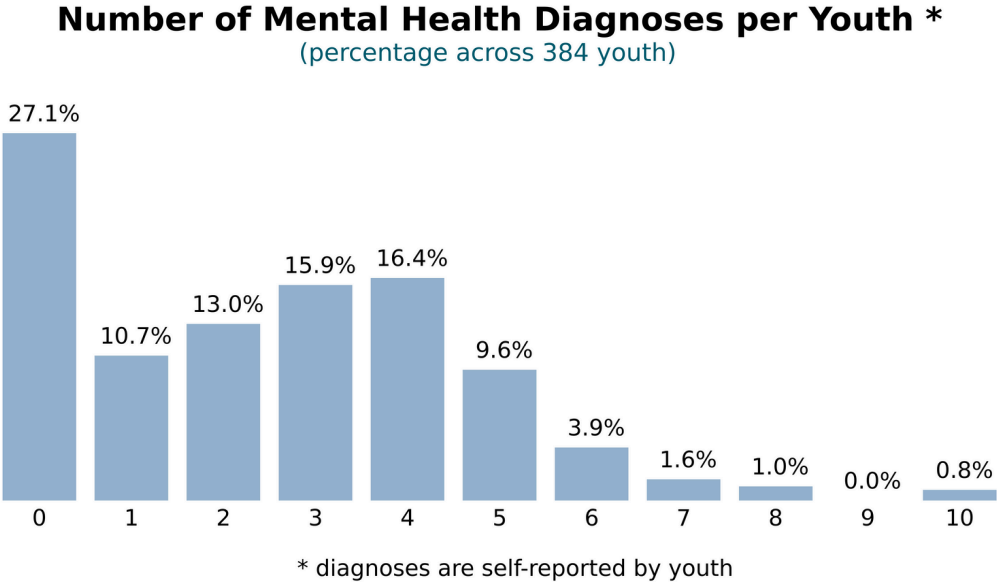


Figure 16: Number of mental health diagnoses per youth across 384 surveyed youth.

3.2.6. History of Being Exposed to Violence, Substance Use and Abuse and the Criminal Justice System

Exposure to violence in the home was not uncommon amongst the survey participants with approximately half (49%) reporting that they had to leave their home and live elsewhere due to violence in the home. Amongst the youth who experienced or were exposed to violence in the home, 36% stated that the violence affected their ability to continue in school or find a job. Only 11% of the youth said they had been in an alcohol or substance abuse treatment program, and 14% of youth said that alcohol or substance use had impacted their ability to find safe

housing. Almost a third of all survey participants reported being arrested (29%), and 12% of the youth had been incarcerated at some point in their lives (see **Table 15**).

History with Violence and other Activities: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q16 Sometimes we experience things in life that make it challenging to find a safe place to live, stay in school, and find and keep a job.

QUESTION	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Ever leave home due to violence	190	49.5%
Did violence in home ever affected school / job	139	36.2%
Ever been arrested	111	28.9%
Did alcohol / substance abuse ever affect ability to find a safe place to live	53	13.8%
Ever been incarcerated	45	11.7%
Ever been in alcohol / substance abuse treatment program	42	10.9%
Ever been involved in a gang	32	8.3%

Table 15: History of experiences with violence and other activities across 384 surveyed youth.

3.3. Summary of Desired Services

Youth experiencing unstable housing require a suite of developmentally appropriate services to help them obtain housing and address any barriers that might prevent them from maintaining long-term, safe housing. One of the primary objectives of the study was to learn from the youth which services they would like to access and would best meet their needs.



While 66% of the youth said they were interested in receiving long-term support with housing and shelter, a higher percentage of youth were interested in receiving financial assistance (76%), employment assistance (71%), and practical assistance (69%). This high interest in economic related assistance indicates the need for short and long-term support regardless of where they are in the housing/shelter process. Service providers interviewed at the beginning of the study also shared that young people were often seeking these services more than others. One RHY service provider said:

“Yeah it's usually housing number one. A lot of the time, we ask them what are your top three needs when they come in. A lot of them will say a job, some of them write food, some concrete stuff like clothes. That's usually what they identify when they come in. I think what a lot of them also really need and get from us is a community and sense of connection. And they get that from the other youth in the space as well as our staff. ”



[Site 1]

In addition to economic related assistance, the majority of youth were also interested in educational assistance (66%) and life skills support (68%), two services that would further help them prepare for long-term stability and self-sufficiency. Youth reported interest in health related services as well, with 62% interested in receiving medical assistance, 55% mental health services, and 20% substance and alcohol treatment services.

Survey participants were asked a multitude of questions about their interest in receiving different types of services. **Figure 17** shows the results across all service categories.

Desired Services and Needs: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Displays the desired services of youth (Q322,Q323,Q324,Q325,Q326,Q327,Q328,Q329,Q330,Q331,Q332,Q333,Q334)

Notes: Percentages for each service are based on 384 unique youth.

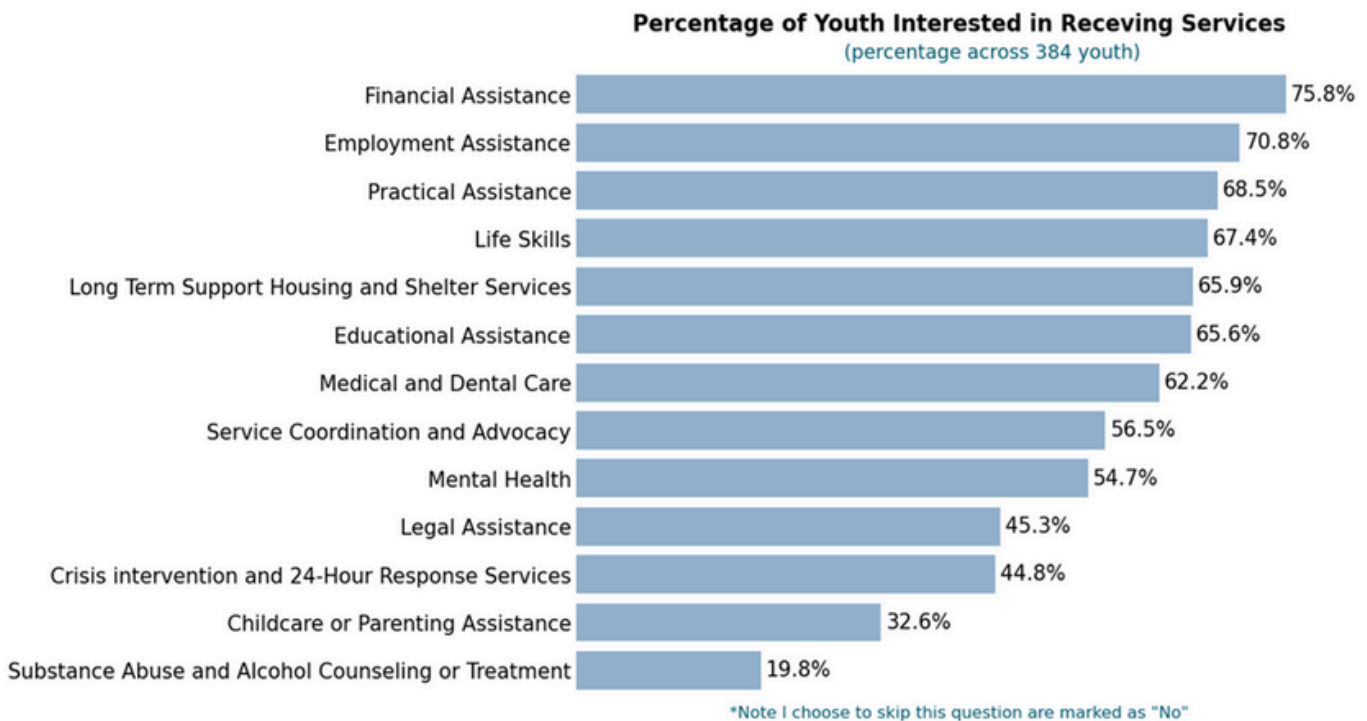


Figure 17: Services youth are interested in receiving across 384 surveyed youth.

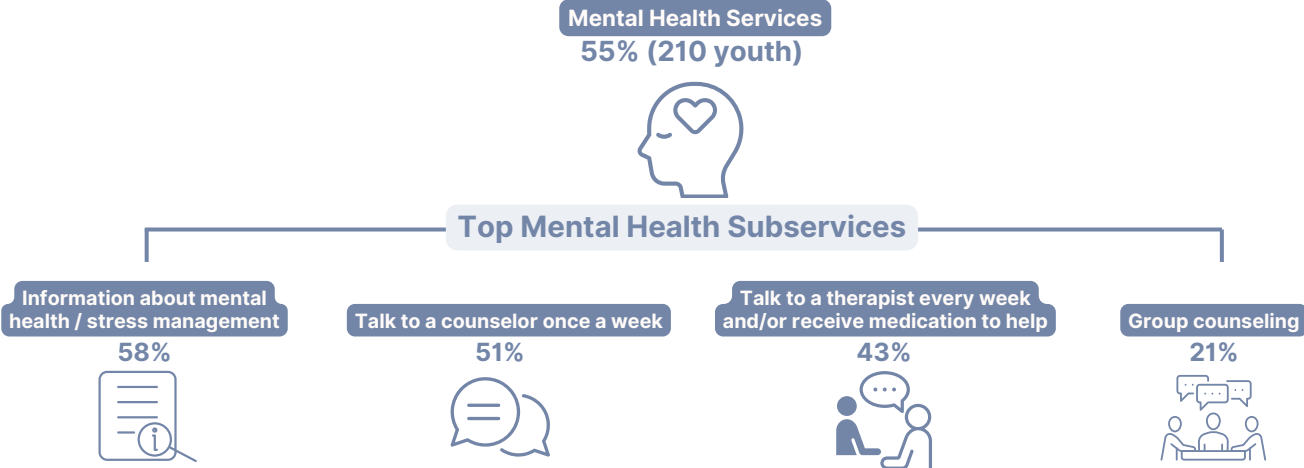
3.3.1. Mental Health Services

RHY programs often try to provide mental health services on site by hiring clinical social workers and other licensed therapists as either full or part-time staff and host psychiatric nurse practitioners or psychiatrists on a weekly basis or another scheduled timeframe. Programs will also refer youth in need of mental health services to therapy or medical groups with whom they have partnerships. However, several RHY providers spoke of the shortage of mental health services in their programs and city-wide. One RHY provider explained:

“...we usually have a waitlist for psychiatric services. We finally got to a place where we have enough therapists that everyone can get therapy when they want it. We used to have a waitlist for that. But the psychiatrist we actually subcontract with another organization...because we don't have a medical license. So the psychiatrist comes on site two days a week and youth need it even more than that.”
[Site 1]

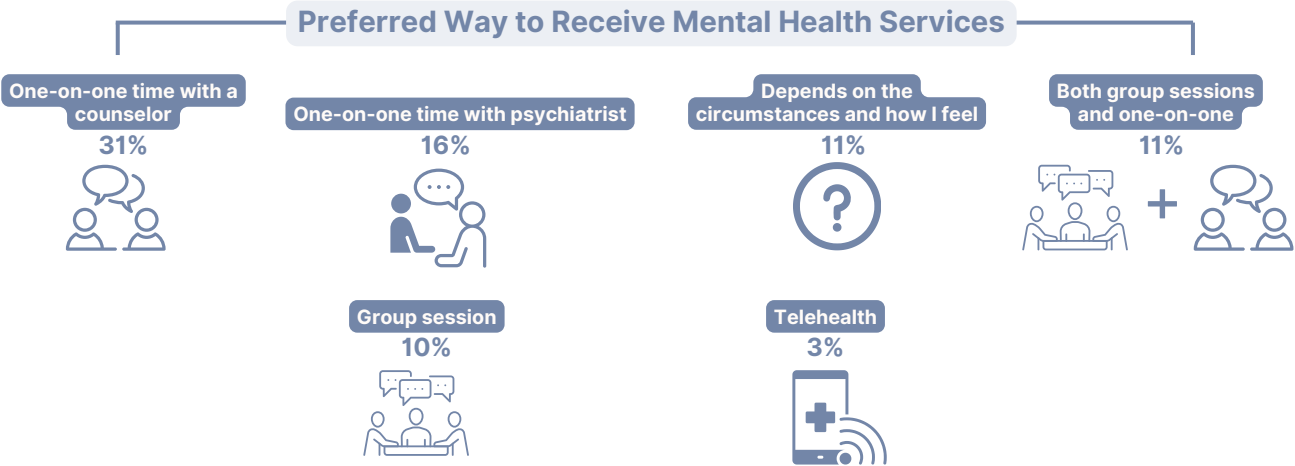
Over half of the youth who participated in the survey said they were interested in mental health services (55%), possibly reflecting the high number of youth with mental health diagnoses or youth who are struggling with mental health issues and haven't had the opportunity to obtain treatment. The interest in mental health services could also reflect youth just wanting someone to talk to about their challenges. One focus group participant shared that they felt cared for when a RHY staff offered opportunities to speak with a mental health professional:

“When you have a situation, I say this because my mom is sick now, right? And to talk to her has been really hard on me, it makes me sentimental, very weak, it makes me very unstable. If the staff here see me crying they come over asking if I need to talk to a psychologist, if I need something, they're very attentive. They really care about us and our wellbeing and they look for a way to make us happy, like it's your house so that you're happy.”
[Focus Group 4]



Of those who were interested in these services, 51% said they wanted to be able to speak to a counselor once a week, and 43% said they would like to meet with a therapist every week and/or receive medication management. 6% of the youth said they wanted to be referred to an in-patient treatment facility. The majority of youth would be interested in learning more about mental health and stress management (58%), indicating opportunities for hosting workshops and other activities for youth (see **Table 17**).

When asked how the youth would prefer to receive mental health services, 46% would prefer one-on-one time with either a counselor or psychiatrist. 10% of the study participants preferred group sessions and the least preferred method of mental health service provision was telehealth at 3% (see **Table 16**). The low percentage of interest most likely reflects the youth’s housing instability and lack of access to private spaces necessary to participate in telehealth, as well as the need for in-person connection to safe adults.



Preferences for Receiving Mental Health Services: Across 210 RHY Wanting Mental Health Services

Survey Question: Q228 How do you prefer to receive Mental Health Services? Please select the option that appeals most to you.

Notes: Percentages are based on 210 youth wanting mental health services.

PREFERRED WAYS TO RECEIVE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
One-on-one time with a counselor	64	30.5%
One-on-one time with psychiatrist	33	15.7%
Depends on the circumstances and how I feel	24	11.4%
Both group sessions and one-on-one	23	11.0%
Group session	21	10.0%
Telehealth	6	2.9%
I choose to skip the question	36	17.1%
Unanswered	3	1.4%

Table 16: Preference for receiving mental health services across 210 youth wanting mental health services.

Mental Health Subservices: Across 210 RHY Wanting Mental Health Services

Survey Question: Q226 What type of Mental Health Services are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Notes: Percentages are based on 210 youth wanting mental health services.

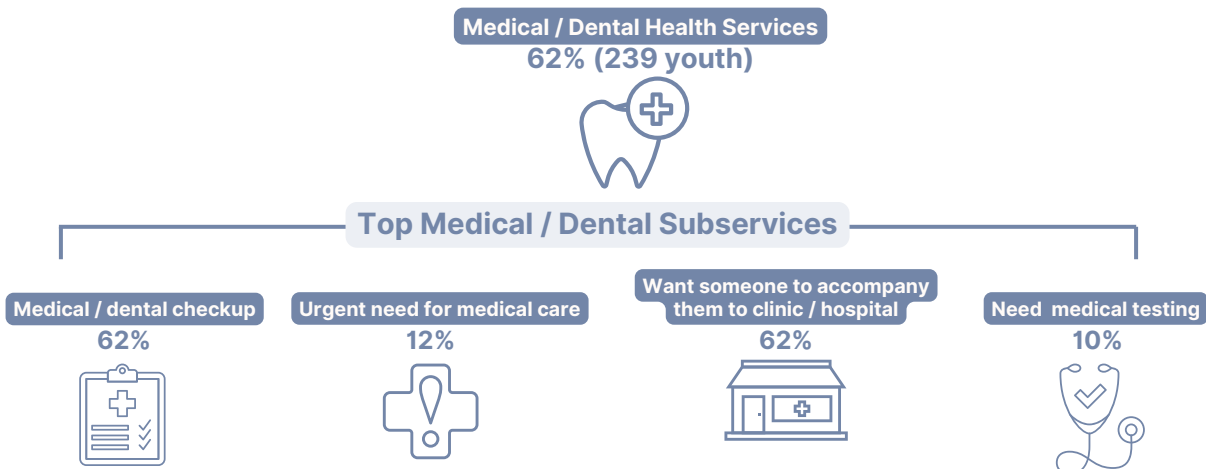
MENTAL HEALTH SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I would like some information about mental health and/or stress mgmt	122	58.1%
I would like to be able to talk to a counselor once a week	106	50.5%
I would like to talk to a therapist every week and/or receive medication to help manage my feelings	90	42.9%
I would like to receive group counseling	43	20.5%
I would like to be referred to an in-patient facility	13	6.2%
If Other, please explain	7	3.3%
Not sure	20	9.5%
I choose to skip this question	22	10.5%

Table 17: Interest in mental health subservices across 210 youth wanting mental health services.

Other Category Responses: Anger issues; Psychiatrist; I receive weekly consulting; On call or zoom support.

3.3.2. Medical / Dental Health Services

Almost two-thirds (62%) of survey participants said they were interested in receiving medical services. To ascertain the level of medical need the youth have (e.g., checkup, surgery), they were asked to indicate the kinds of service they would be interested in now or in the future. The majority of the youth responded that they were feeling ok but needed a medical/dental checkup (62%). Other youth shared they had a more urgent need for medical care, with 12% saying they have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and are scared they have a major health issue, and 8% said they are injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with them to a clinic/hospital. Lastly, 10% of study participants said they need to be tested for pregnancy, HIV, or STI (see [Table 18](#)).



In addition to the medical health services mentioned above, youth may also benefit from ongoing emotional support while accessing medical care. Similar to mental health services, many RHY programs either provide medical services on site or have partnerships with medical centers where they can easily refer youth. However, youth may not follow through with medical care because they are scared and are trying to navigate it alone as a young adult. One service provider explained:

“A lot of the young people they will go to the clinic for initial assessment, and they don't want to go back for results either because they are afraid of what the results are or they're just not used to. But we do try to keep track of our youth and make sure that they're getting well-rounded medical services. If we do not provide the service in-house then we will escort them to their appointment outside if we don't think that they can or will go there by themselves.”

[Focus Group 3]

The fear around uncertainty when accessing medical care may be reflected in the youth who said they have pain or medical concerns and are either scared they might be seriously ill or want someone to go with them to the hospital.

Medical / Dental Health Subservices: Across 239 RHY Wanting Medical / Dental Health Services

Survey Question: Q231 What type of Medical and Dental Care are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 239 youth wanting medical / dental health services.

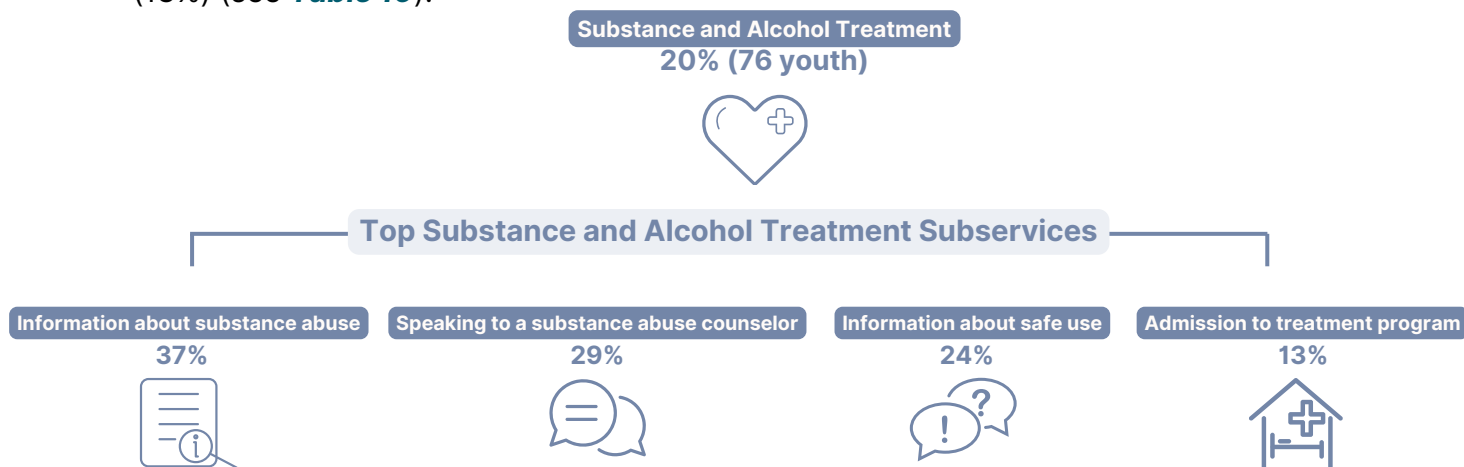
MEDICAL / DENTAL HEALTH SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I am feeling ok, but I need a medical and/or a dental check up	149	62.3%
I have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and I am scared I have a major health issue	28	11.7%
I am concerned I might be pregnant, have HIV or have an STI and need testing	23	9.6%
I am injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with me to the clinic/hospital	18	7.5%
I need surgery and need assistance finding a doctor and paying for the surgery	12	5.0%
If Other, please explain	6	2.5%
Not sure	21	8.8%
I choose to skip this question	36	15.1%

Table 18: Interest in medical / dental health subservices across 239 youth wanting medical / dental health services.

Other Category Responses: Trans stuff; Psychiatrist ; Orthodontist work; I need braces, but for years they have been denying me.; None

3.3.3. Drug and Substance Abuse Services

Less than a quarter of survey participants (20%) said they were interested in receiving substance abuse and alcohol treatment services. Of those interested in these services, the greatest service need was information about drugs and alcohol abuse (37%). Youth were also interested in services specific to substance abuse, such as speaking to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor (29%) and getting information about safe substance use until they are ready to stop using (24%). Some youth reported interest in being admitted into a substance abuse treatment program (13%) (see [Table 19](#)).



Drug and Substance Abuse Subservices: Across 76 RHY Wanting Drug and Substance Abuse Services

Survey Question: Q236 What type of Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Notes: Percentages are out of 76 youth who said “Yes” to being interested in Drug and Substance Abuse Services.

SUBSTANCE / ALCOHOL ABUSE TREATMENT SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I would like information about drugs and alcohol abuse	28	36.8%
I would like to speak to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor about my drug/alcohol use	22	29.0%
I would like information about how to use drugs and alcohol safely until I am ready to stop	18	23.7%
I would like to be admitted to a treatment program	10	13.2%
If other, please explain	3	4.0%
Not sure	11	14.5%
I choose to skip this question	21	27.6%

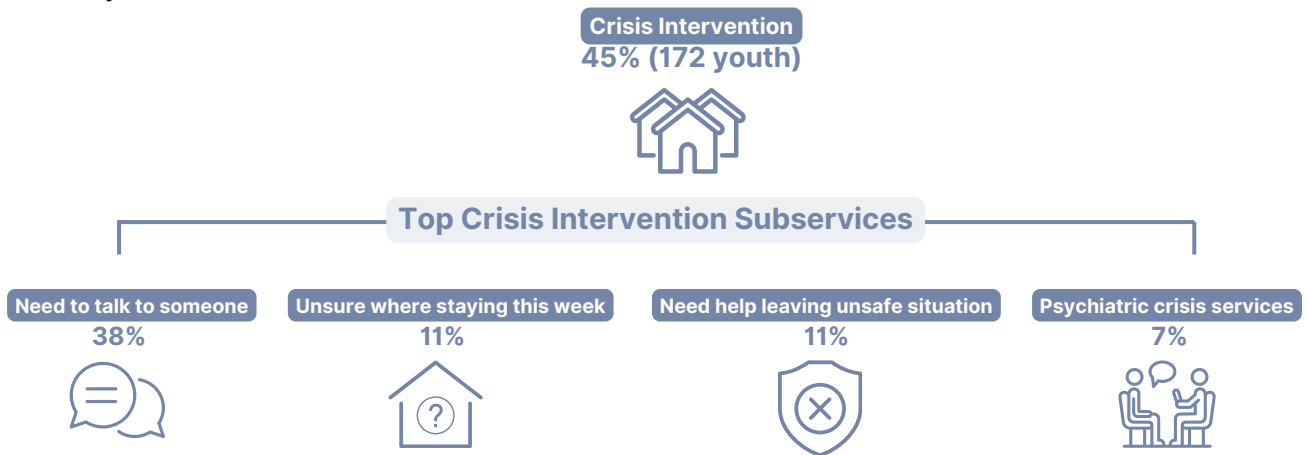
Table 19: Interest in drug and substance abuse subservices across 76 youth wanting drug and substance abuse services.

Other Category Responses: Not Now But Later On In The Future

3.3.4. Crisis Intervention and 24-Hour Response Services

Crisis intervention services are an integral component of RHY programs. Forty-five percent of youth said they would be interested in crisis intervention services now or in the future. The crisis intervention service youth most wanted was to talk to someone that week because they were feeling a high level of stress (38%). In addition, 7% reported interest in psychiatric crisis services, and those who indicated “other” (3%) wrote in mental health related items such as “I have a chemical imbalance” and “in need of therapist”.

Assistance accessing shelter was also reported as an interest by some youth because they either didn’t know where they were going to stay that week (11%), or they needed to leave an unsafe situation (11%). Survey participants were already connected to RHY programs which may explain the low number of youth saying they needed shelter assistance.



Crisis Intervention and 24-Hour Response Subservices: Across 172 RHY Wanting Crisis Services

Survey Question: Q242 What type of Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply:

Note: Percentages are based on 172 youth wanting crisis services.

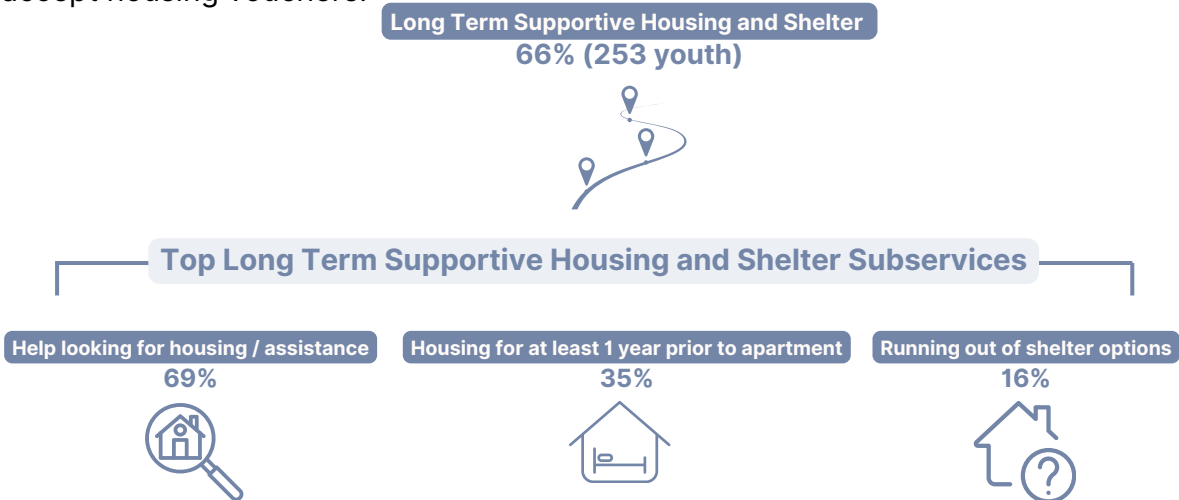
CRISIS INTERVENTION /24-HR RESPONSE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I am feeling really stressed and need to talk to someone this week	65	37.8%
I don't know where I'm staying this week and need help getting into shelter	19	11.1%
I am in an unsafe situation and need safety planning and leaving the situation	19	11.2%
I am feeling suicidal and/or want to harm myself and need immediate assistance	12	7.0%
If Other, please explain	6	3.5%
Not sure	42	24.4%
I choose to skip this question	46	26.7%

Table 20: Interest in crisis intervention subservices across 172 youth wanting crisis intervention services.

Other Category Responses: Would Like To Seek Help; Relationship problems; I have a chemical imbalance ; In need of a therapist; To have when crisis

3.3.5. Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services

One of the goals of the majority of RHY programs is helping unstably housed youth obtain and maintain long-term housing. Survey participants also expressed interest in services to help them achieve housing stability (66%). While homeless youth qualify to apply for housing assistance, it is a long, complicated, and tedious process from the application to move in day. Focus group participants often spoke of the difficulty of navigating the housing process, obtaining all of the required documentation, waiting for approval, and finding apartments they could afford and accept housing vouchers.



One focus group participant described the process and the importance of having an active and informed case manager help them through the process:

“The case manager is who gets you from Point A to Point B, they’re the one who gets you out of TIL into rapid rehousing. From your first meeting with them you essentially create a map, a plan with them and every month you create an updated case plan of what you’re doing and what you plan to do and basically pinpoints of what your goals are for what you want to do. A plan that I created with my case manager is that I want to be in my apartment by fall, I want to spend all this summer just looking at apartments and just getting the whole process done because I don’t want it to be by the time my next birthday rolls around that I’m still homeless...you know what I mean? So, from that she was like Ok, cool, let’s start from now and let’s plan all the way until then and I was like Ok, cool. And I had a good starting point because I had all my documents, I was working, it wasn’t unrealistic. A lot of it’s just waiting. It’s hard to do nothing”

[Focus Group 1]

The complexity of the housing assistance application process and finding affordable apartments willing to accept housing vouchers may be why study participants said support with these two areas had the highest percentage of interest (69%) compared to other long-term housing support. Other youth said they were interested in housing they can stay in for at least a year until they can move into an apartment (35%) and 16% said they were running out of shelter options, also

reflecting the lengthy process and the need for additional temporary housing solutions until youth are able to obtain long-term housing (see [Table 21](#)).

Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Subservices: Across 253 RHY Wanting Long Term Housing Services

Survey Question: Q247 What type of Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 253 youth wanting long term housing support services.

LONG TERM SUPPORTIVE HOUSING / SHELTER SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need help looking for an apartment or applying for housing assistance	175	69.2%
I need housing I can stay in for at least a year so I can prepare to move into an apartment	88	34.8%
I have run out of shelter options and need a long-term place to stay in the next couple of months	40	15.8%
If Other, please explain	3	1.2%
Not sure	16	6.3%
I choose to skip this question	33	13.0%

Table 21: Interest in long term supportive housing and shelter subservices across 253 youth wanting long term supportive housing and shelter services.

3.3.6. Legal Assistance Services

Forty-five percent of youth said they were interested in legal services now or in the future. The legal services youth were most interested in were a few sessions of legal counseling to learn about their rights in the workplace or housing court, legally change their name, or obtain an ID (45%). Other youth were interested in services likely requiring a knowledgeable legal advocate to help with getting an order of protection or public benefits reinstated (17%) and understanding criminal record and clearing open warrants (11%). Study participants were also interested in receiving legal representation for family court related matters (9%) and immigration assistance or criminal court proceedings (14%) (see [Table 22](#)).



Legal Assistance Subservices: Across 174 RHY Wanting Legal Services

Survey Question: Q252 What type of Legal Assistance are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 174 youth wanting legal services.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need one or two sessions of legal counseling to discuss my rights in the workplace, my rights in housing court, obtaining a name change, or help to obtain legal ID	79	45.4%
I need help to get an order of protection or help with assistance with getting back my public benefits	30	17.2%
I need help going to court to defend me in court, seek legal immigration status, or prosecute someone	25	14.4%
I need help understanding what is on my criminal record or clearing up open warrants	19	10.9%
I need help with a family court case	16	9.2%
If Other, please explain	3	1.7%
Not sure	25	14.4%
I choose to skip this question	42	24.1%

Table 22: Legal assistance subservices across 174 youth wanting legal assistance services.

Other Category Responses: Need help with understanding the process of changing one's name and/or gender identity on identification papers

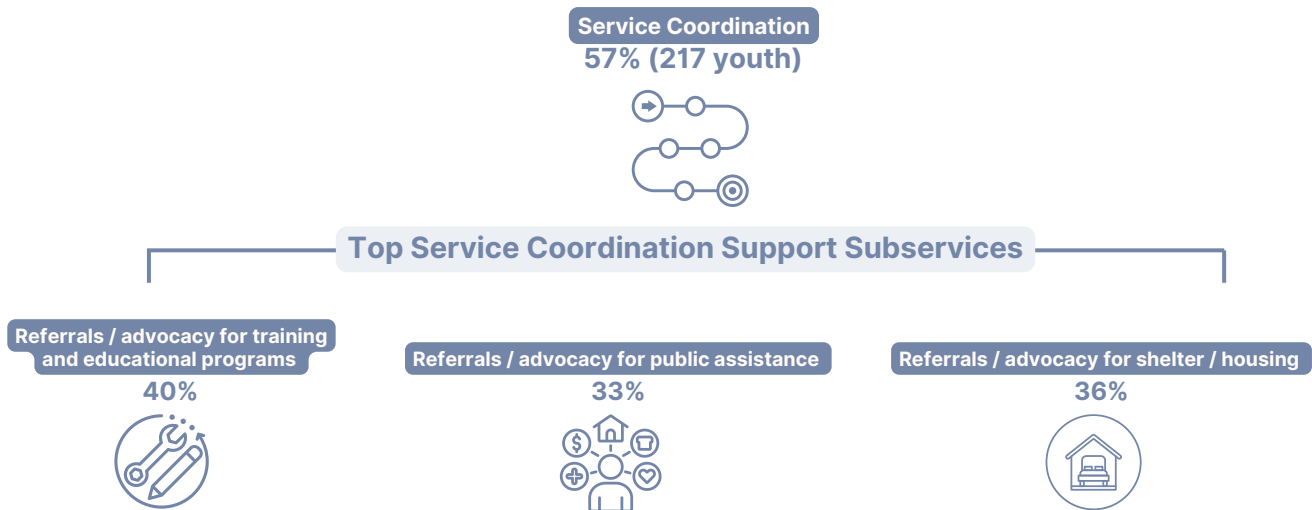
3.3.7. Service Coordination and Advocacy Services

Significant effort is made by RHY programs to establish opportunities for youth to receive holistic services on site to minimize the need for the youth to navigate multiple complex systems and social service programs. However, no one program has the capacity to provide everything a young person may need, requiring providers to make referrals and advocate for young people to receive all services and benefits for which they are qualified. Therefore, service coordination is an essential function of case management in RHY programs.

Fifty-seven percent of survey participants said they were interested in receiving service coordination and advocacy. There was no standout priority youth reported as being most important in receiving. Referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs (40%), for shelter and housing (36%) and for public assistance (33%) and generated about the same amount of interest (see [Table 23](#)).

Focus group participants frequently spoke of service coordination, referrals, and advocacy. Many were frustrated trying to navigate large and complex systems, such as housing and public assistance, without additional support from case managers. Some expressed dismay at the lack of information they receive about different processes and the requirements necessary to apply for housing. Others

felt that case managers didn't always know the different opportunities available to the young people and that they often learn about other programs and opportunities through their peers. This exchange of information between peers also occurred during focus group sessions.



Participants shared that in order to receive the assistance they needed they had to advocate for themselves to their case managers, which was challenging because they weren't always sure what to advocate for. A few participants explained:

P1: "That's one of the hardest things, the people at the front desk"

I1: "So it's basically you have to advocate for yourself to get the help that you need?"

P1: "Especially if you don't have a plan you have to ask your case manager, 'Hey, do you have a plan for me or do I have to make my own and what are the resources that I can make my own.'"

P3: "Exactly, what if you don't know how to visualize things, you don't know how to put things out into place, they should help structure."

[Focus Group 3]

Young people expressed appreciation for case managers who recommended opportunities based on the young person's interest. One participant spoke fondly of their case manager saying:

"He always talks to me, telling me stuff, he told me about this [the focus group] earlier and he didn't have to...People let you know about different opportunities and resources, things you can do, because he'll also listen for your aspirations, and he'll try to connect you with something"

[Focus Group 3]

Service Coordination and Advocacy Subservices: Across 217 RHY Wanting Service Coordination and Advocacy Services

Survey Question: Q257 What type of Service Coordination and Advocacy are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 217 youth wanting service coordination services.

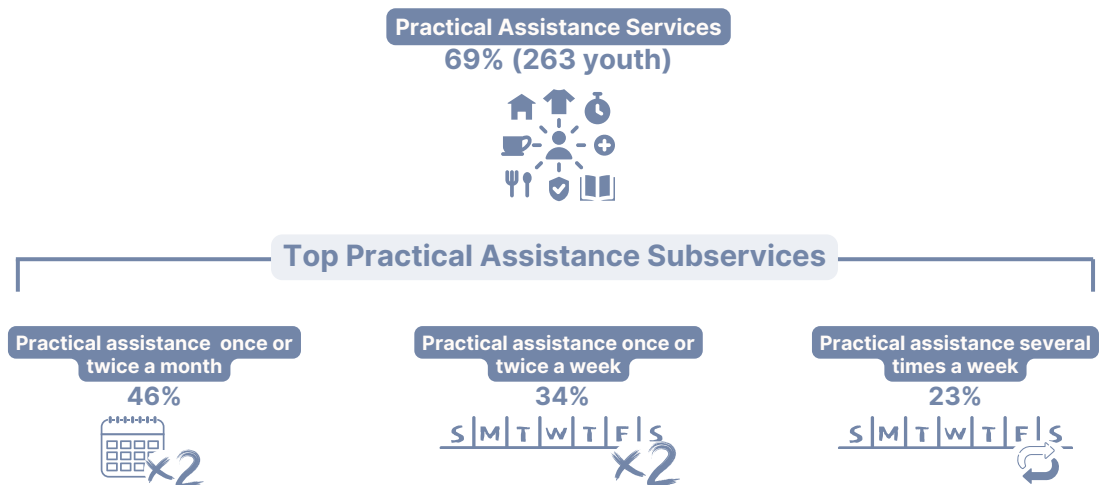
SERVICE COORDINATION / ADVOCACY SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs	86	39.6%
I need referrals and advocacy for shelter and housing	79	36.4%
I need referrals and advocacy for public assistance	72	33.2%
If other, please explain	10	4.6%
Not sure	32	14.8%
I choose to skip this question	44	20.3%

Table 23: Service coordination/advocacy subservices across 217 youth wanting service coordination/advocacy services.

Other Category Responses: I need referrals and advocacy for changing legal name; Veterinary Programs/ Access to programs of interests ; I want an internship in working on motor vehicles; Immigration Court

3.3.8. Practical Assistance Services

As anticipated, well over half of the survey participants said they were interested in practical assistance (69%). The frequency in which youth were interested in receiving practical assistance varied with 46% of the youth saying they needed help with transportation, food, clothing, or personal items “once or twice a month” to needing it several times a week (23%) (see [Table 24](#)).



Focus group participants often spoke of accessing services specifically for practical assistance. When asked why they were accessing services at a particular agency, focus group participants described primarily being interested in food and pantry:

P2: “So I come here for mostly the services like the shower services, laundry, pantry, I have internships here as well.”

P4: “Pantry used to be super good. Pantry is just back to what it used to be.”

I1: “Which is what?”

P4: “Yea so everything from hygiene whatever, fresh clothes, simple stuff like underwear”

I1: “So what brought you to [agency] and what kind of services are you getting here?”

P5: “What brought me in is the food and the internship and finding stuff like that.”

[Focus Group 2]

Youth accessing services at other agencies shared similar sentiments and were keenly aware of programs that provided good food and when, as well as where they could obtain clothing and other personal items.

Practical Assistance Subservices: Across 263 RHY Wanting Practical Assistance Services

Survey Question: Q262 What type of Practical Assistance are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 263 youth wanting practical assistance services.

PRACTICAL ASSISTANCE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a month	121	46.0%
I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a week	89	33.8%
I need help with transportation, food, clothing and hygiene items several times a week	60	22.8%
If Other, please explain	2	0.76%
Not sure	23	8.7%
I choose to skip this question	49	18.6%

Table 24: Practical assistance subservices across 263 youth wanting practical assistance services.

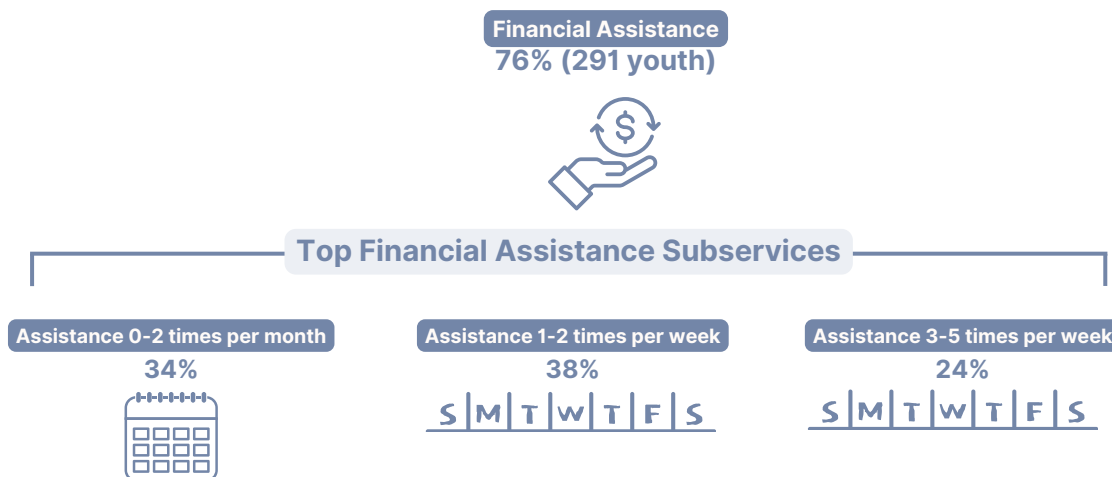
Other Category Responses: Para pagar mi vivienda propia

3.3.9. Financial Assistance Services

In addition to practical assistance, many young people said they were interested in receiving financial assistance (76%). Thirty-eight percent of youth said they were

interested in receiving financial assistance one to two times per week and 34% said they were interested in financial assistance one to two times per month. A quarter of the youth said they needed it three to five times per week (24%) (see [Table 25](#)).

The difference in frequency of service provision may be reflective of where youth are in the process of achieving stable employment and housing. As noted earlier, youth struggle to obtain employment and the jobs they are able to access do not pay enough for them to be fully self-sufficient in NYC.



Financial Assistance Subservices: Across 291 RHY Wanting Financial Services

Survey Question: Q267 What type of Financial Assistance (e.g., utilities, assistance with rent, cash) are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 291 youth wanting financial services.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Financial assistance 1-2 times per week	109	37.5%
Financial assistance 0 -2 times per month	99	34.0%
Financial assistance 3-5 times per week	70	24.1%
If Other, please explain	5	1.7%
Not sure	32	11.0%
I choose to skip this question	38	13.1%

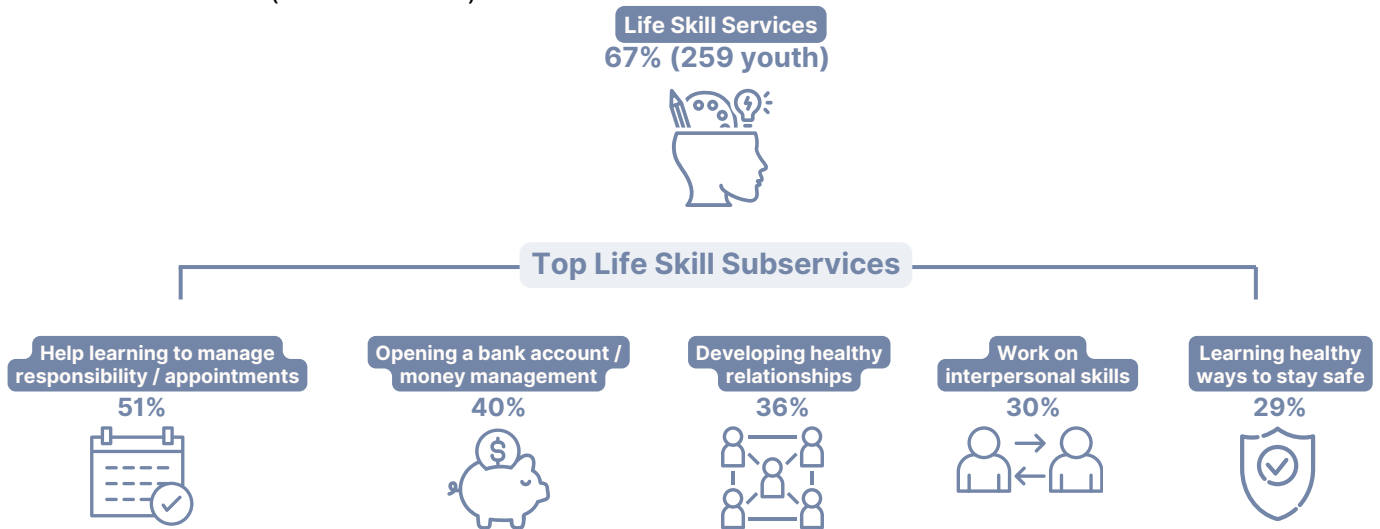
Table 25: Financial subservices across 291 youth wanting financial assistance services.

Other Category Responses: Any incentives I can get to pay bills; Nesecito varias cosas ; I believe that should vary

3.3.10. Life Skill Services

The vast majority of unstably housed youth have experienced multiple challenges and traumas within their family unit growing up contributing to the inability to remain in the family home. Therefore, many youth have not had the structure and guidance to learn the skills necessary to become self-sufficient, and they are taxed with learning these skills on their own and earlier than many youth who grew up in a

different environment. A significant percentage of survey participants are interested in life skills services (67%). Learning how to manage their responsibilities and appointments had the highest percentage of interest at 51%. Over a third of youth wanted to learn how to open a bank account, cash checks, and manage a budget (40%). Many of the youth were interested in developing skills around interpersonal communication (30%), and how to develop healthy relationships (36%). Also notable is 29% of the youth are interested in learning healthy ways to remain safe (see [Table 26](#)).



Some focus group participants spoke of needing assistance with learning about banking and checking accounts. The discussions around life skills related topics primarily focused on developing interpersonal and communication skills. Youth acknowledged it can be challenging engaging with so many different personalities and managing trauma symptoms while staying in a shelter environment. They expressed interest in learning how to communicate effectively and manage their emotions. Two focus group participants suggested it would be helpful to have opportunities to talk to others in the shelter because they mostly learn how to get along with their roommates, but not other young people. They said:

P3: One thing you could do is start having workshops between each other and networking because I feel like a lot of us, we could help each other but we don't really talk enough..."

P1: "Communication"

P3: "Because how are we supposed to feel comfortable when all random [people around], that's kind of what they're [agency staff] supposed to do being coordinators and whatnot."

P1: "You only get to be cool with your roommate"

[Focus Group 3]

While somewhat explicitly stated, part of the interest in developing interpersonal skills is to help youth manage their emotions and feel safe around others.

Life Skill Subservices: Across 259 RHY Wanting Life Skill Services

Survey Question: Q272 What type of Life Skills are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 259 youth wanting life skill services.

LIFE SKILL SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need help learning how to manage my responsibilities and appointments	131	50.6%
I need help opening a bank account, cashing checks, and learning how to manage a budget	103	39.8%
I need help learning how to develop healthy relationships	92	35.5%
I need help to work on my interpersonal skills	78	30.1%
I need help learning healthy ways to stay safe	76	29.3%
I need help learning how to cook meals and do laundry	56	21.6%
I need help learning different technology	56	21.6%
If Other, please explain	8	3.1%
Not sure	23	8.9%
I choose to skip this question	35	13.5%

Table 26: Life skill subservices across 259 youth wanting life skill services.

Other Category Responses: Put dedication in things I really want ; I Need Help With All Life Skills ; I need help using my emotions and turning it into creativity ; Housing ; Deep cleaning, house keeping, lawn work, how to operate various cleaning equipment ; I need help learn English and art courses ; I need help finding jobs and grants

3.3.11. Employment Assistance Services

The majority of young people said they were interested in receiving employment assistance services (71%). Forty-nine percent of youth wanted help with job training and placement, and 38% expressed interest in assistance with resume and job search strategies. In addition to help securing employment, youth were interested in assistance with maintaining their jobs with 36% wanting to learn how to communicate professionally with supervisors and coworkers (see [Table 27](#)).



Focus group participants readily discussed challenges with obtaining and maintaining employment and their interest in receiving additional support around these issues. Many young people expressed frustration at trying to find employment in NYC. One participant said they **“never had a job because nobody one want to hire me”** [Focus Group 2] after spending several months applying to a lot of jobs in the food industry without receiving a call back.

I1: “What’s it like trying to get work in the city?”

P2: “Hard”

P1: “It’s hard, it’s so hard”

P3: “Difficult”

I1: “What’s so hard about it?”

P1: “Especially if you don’t have experience, they’re looking for things, it’s mostly experience, we want 2 years experience, 1 year experience, and as soon as you don’t have it they’re just like nope...”

[Focus Group 3]

Lack of experience was a common struggle for young people and it prevented them from being competitive in the job market. Some shared that they need more help gaining experience and addressing the lack of experience in the job application process.

P1: “Because I remember when I did my resume they [agency workers] were like did you do anything in high school and I’m like Ma’am, my dad did not let me leave the house, she was like anything, even in middle school.”

P3: “They don’t know it don’t help in situations like that when you don’t have any real job experience, they don’t know how to help you build a resume.”

I1: “But you also were children, you were teens, your focus was supposed to be studying.”

P1: “But the employers don’t care about that”

[Focus Group 3]

Some focus group participants said that being unstably housed is a barrier to employment and there needs to be more programming providing a direct pipeline into employment opportunities.

One participant said,

“Yea so there needs to be a network that makes it that the employer can’t discriminate against people who have a direct network into it, and especially underprivileged children who are in the system”

[Focus Group 1]

Another participant agreed and explained that having a direct connection to employment has been tremendously beneficial to them:

“And that’s exactly what happened with my situation financially where I just kind of had a direct pipeline network that led me into it so that now I’m able to support myself but I’ve had employment for 2 years straight, that is a great accomplishment that they created that pipeline and that needs to be created at [agency], there needs to be a pipeline, a seamless pipeline of making sure you have employment, making sure you have housing, making sure you have all your documents so that it’s all a flow. ”

[Focus Group 1]

Employment Assistance Subservices: Across 272 RHY Wanting Employment Services

Survey Question: Q277 What type of Employment Assistance are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 272 youth wanting employment services.

EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need help with job training and placement	133	48.9%
I need help with resume and job searching strategies	102	37.5%
I need to learn how to communicate professionally with my supervisor and coworkers	99	36.4%
If Other, please explain	6	2.2%
Not sure	26	9.6%
I choose to skip this question	50	18.4%

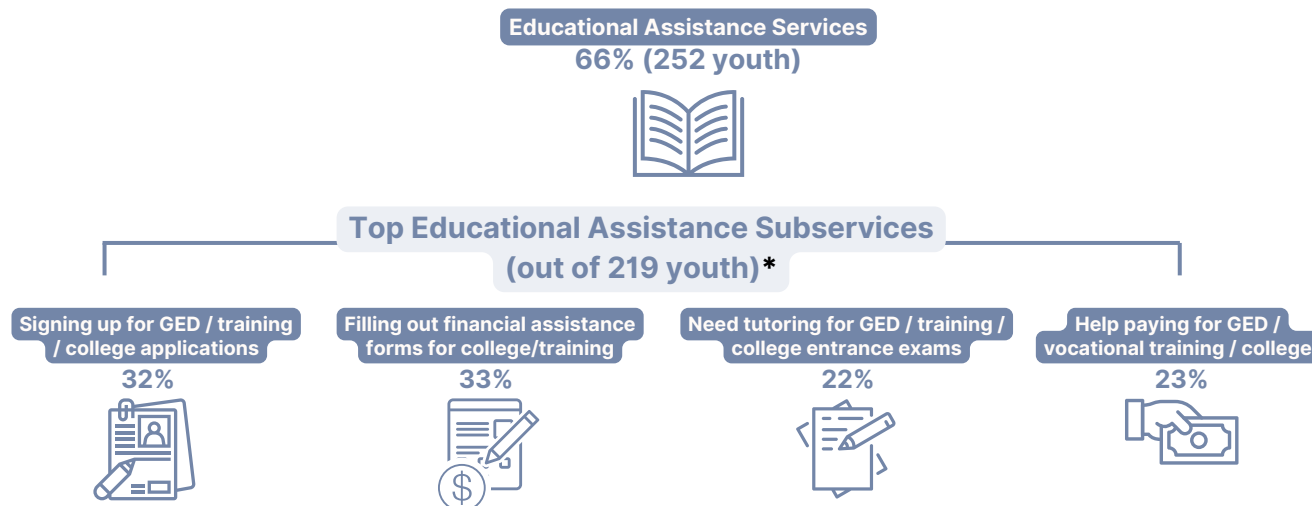
Table 27: Employment assistance subservices across 272 youth wanting employment assistance services.

Other Category Responses: Accommodations; Start a Business

3.3.12. Educational Assistance Services

Sixty-six percent of survey participants expressed interest in receiving educational assistance related services. Of the youth interested in educational support*, 55% wanted some form of assistance to pay for their education either in the form of help filling out financial aid forms (32%) or help paying for GED/vocational training/college (23%). Other youth were interested in assistance with applying for

education programs (33%) and studying for entrance exams (22%) so they can be admitted into a program (see [Table 28](#)).



Educational Assistance Subservices: Across 219* RHY Wanting Educational Services

Survey Question: Q282 What type of Educational Assistance are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply:

Note: Percentages are based on 219* youth wanting educational services.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I need help signing up for my GED/vocational training, or help filling out my college applications	69	31.5%
I need help filling out financial assistance forms for college/vocational school	73	33.3%
I need some tutoring for the GED/vocational training/college entrance exams	47	21.5%
I need help paying for my GED/vocational training/college	51	23.3%
If Other, please explain	5	2.3%
Not sure	35	16.0%
I choose to skip this question	51	23.3%

Table 28: Educational assistance subservices across 219* youth wanting educational assistance services.

Other Category Responses: Certification; Diploma; I need help getting into a different college; Debt relief

* An error in the Qualtrics survey logic caused the educational assistance subservice to reflect only a subset of youth seeking assistance, therefore, percentages are based on 219 youth.

3.3.13. Childcare or Parenting Assistance Services

Thirty-three percent of the survey participants expressed interest in receiving childcare and parenting services now or in the future. The number one request from youth interested in these services was parenting classes or coaching (38%). Some youth with children need to take parenting classes or coaching due to a family court mandate (17%). Childcare was also a need for parenting youth with 11% saying they need full-time childcare and 14% needing occasional childcare (see [Table 29](#)).

Parental / Childcare
33% (125 youth)



Top Parental / Childcare Subservices

Need Full Time Childcare

11%



Need Occasional Childcare

14%



Want Parenting Classes / Coaching

38%



Court Mandated Parenting Classes / Coaching

17%



Childcare or Parenting Assistance Subservices: Across 125 RHY Wanting Childcare and Parenting Services

Survey Question: Q287 What type of Childcare or Parenting Assistance are you interested in now or in the future? Select all that apply.

Note: Percentages are based on 125 youth wanting childcare and parenting services.

PARENTING / CHILDCARE SUPPORT SUBSERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I want parenting classes or coaching	47	37.6%
I need to complete parenting classes or coaching as part of a family court matter	21	16.8%
I need occasional childcare	17	13.6%
I need full time childcare	14	11.2%
If other, please explain	3	2.4%
Not sure	22	17.6%
I choose to skip this question	38	30.4%

Table 29: Parental/childcare subservices across 125 youth wanting parental/childcare services.

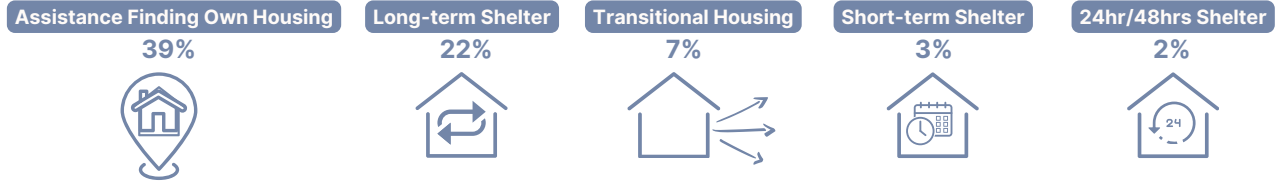
Other Category Responses: -99; I want to know how to manage my emotions and mental health if I was ever given the responsibility of raising a child

3.4. Access and Preferences for Housing and Support Services

3.4.1. Preferred Shelter Type: Across 384 RHY

When asked what type of shelter they would want, over a third of survey participants said they wanted assistance with finding their own housing (39%). Of those who indicated a particular type of shelter 22% said they would want long-term shelter and 7% said transitional. Most youth were not interested in shorter term shelter options with only 3% saying they would want short-term and 2% said shelter for the next 24-48 hours (see **Figure 18**). It is unclear if the choices the youth selected were

Top Preferred Shelter Types



Type of Shelter Seeking: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q200 If you were seeking shelter, what type of shelter would you want?

If you were seeking shelter, what type of shelter would you want?

(percentage across 384 youth)

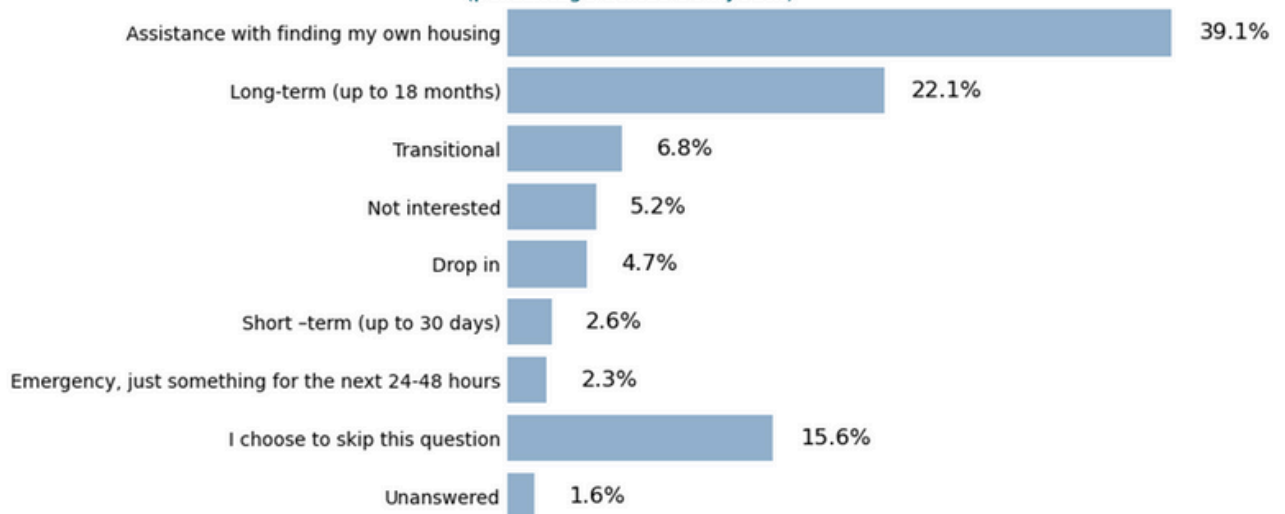
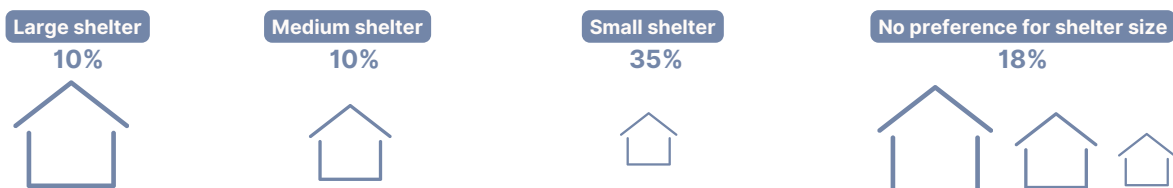


Figure 18: Type of shelter youth are interested in accessing across 384 surveyed youth.

3.4.2. Preferred Shelter Size: Across 384 RHY

Thirty-five percent of survey participants said they would feel most comfortable and safe staying in a shelter with 10 or less beds. Almost half of the youth (43%) either chose to skip the question (25%) or said they don't have a shelter size preference (18%), possibly indicating that shelter size isn't a factor for many youth when it comes to feeling comfortable and safe. Few youth said they specifically felt more comfortable and safer in medium (10%) or large shelters (10%) (see Figure 19).

Top Preferred Shelter Size



Size of Shelter Seeking: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q198 If you were seeking shelter, what size shelter would you feel most comfortable and safe staying in?

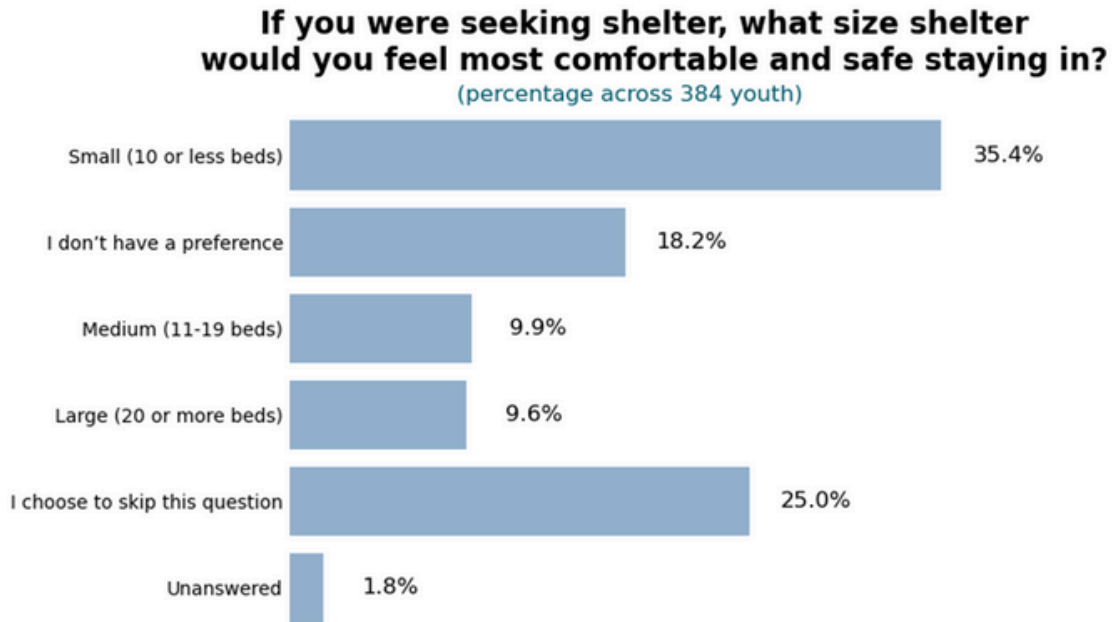
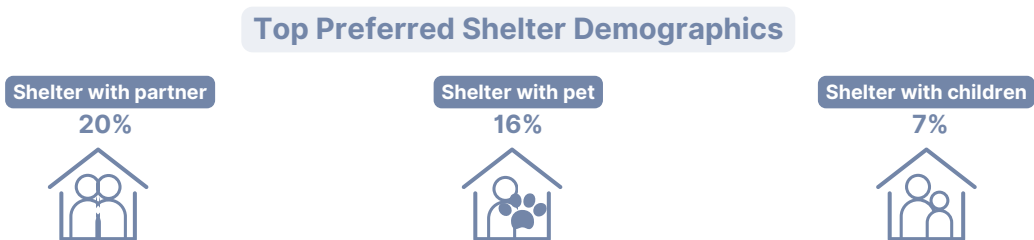


Figure 19: Size of shelter youth are interested in accessing across 384 surveyed youth.

3.4.3. Preferred Shelter Demographics: Across 384 RHY

Youth were asked to identify the kind of community/demographic in a shelter would most appeal to them, as well as whether they would want shelter for anyone in addition to themselves (see [Tables 30 and 31](#)). Thirty-one percent of survey participants said they would prefer LGBT+ specific shelter, 26% said they prefer female only, 26% said they prefer mixed gender and sexual orientations, 12% preferred male only, and 9% preferred transgender only shelter. Some focus group participants reflected similar desires to be in a shelter with individuals who identify the same as themselves, expressing it helped them feel more comfortable and safer. A few participants who had lived in LGBT+ specific shelters expressed frustration and discomfort when beds in the shelter were given to individuals who did not identify as LGBT+.

In addition to preferring shelters based on gender and sexual orientation, youth wanted to access shelter that allowed them to bring other people or their pets. Twenty percent of youth wanted to be able to stay in a shelter with their partner, 16% with their pet, and 7% with their children. Being able to access shelter with a friend (19%) or family member (9%) was also important for some youth.



Shelter Demographics Seeking: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q199 If you were seeking shelter, what kind of community/ demographic in a shelter would appeal to you?

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

PREFERRED SHELTER DEMOGRAPHICS	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
LGBT+	117	30.5%
Female only	101	26.3%
Mixed gender and sexual orientations	98	25.5%
Being able to stay in a shelter with your partner	78	20.3%
Being able to stay in a shelter with your pet	63	16.4%
Male only	45	11.7%
Transgender only	33	8.6%
Being able to stay in a shelter with your children	27	7.0%
I don't have a preference	43	11.2%
If other, please explain	8	2.1%
I choose to skip this question	59	15.4%
Unanswered	5	1.3%

Table 30: Shelter demographics youth are seeking access to across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Being alone; With my sibling; Both male and female; Something that's flexible but not too open; Not looking for shelter

3.4.4. Who Would You Want Shelter / Services For: Across 384 RHY

Seeking Shelter for: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Survey Question: Q203 If you were seeking shelter, would you want shelter or services for someone other than yourself? Please check all that apply.

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

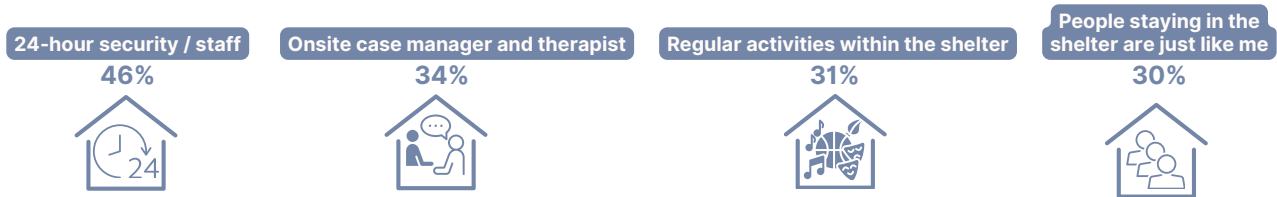
WHO WOULD YOU WANT SERVICES FOR	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Just myself	202	52.6%
Friend	71	18.5%
Partner	71	18.5%
Pet/ service animal/ emotional support animal	45	11.7%
My child	36	9.4%
Relative (sibling, parent, guardian)	33	8.6%
I choose to skip this question	76	19.8%
Unanswered	5	1.3%

Table 31: Who youth are seeking to access shelters with across 384 surveyed youth.

3.4.5. Preferred Shelter Characteristics: Across 384 RHY

An important component of this study is to learn which shelter characteristics would make youth feel safer and more comfortable indicating that they might be more likely to engage in shelter and subsequent services. Survey participants were asked to identify characteristics that they would prefer and those that would be most difficult to follow (see **Tables 32 and 33**). Youth seem to prefer shelters that provide a sense of security and structure. The preferred shelter characteristic chosen the most by study participants was 24-hour security/staff (46%). Similarly, a third of study participants want an onsite case manager and therapist (34%). Thirty-one percent of the youth also wanted regular activities within the shelter. As noted above, staying in a shelter with people just like them is also preferred (30%).

Top Preferred Shelter Characteristics



The least desired shelter characteristics are curfew (10%) and no outside visitors (12%), which also corresponds to the top two characteristics that would be most difficult to follow with curfew at 44% and no outside visitors at 20%. Another shelter policy that youth said is difficult to follow is being required to leave the shelter during the day (18%). Reflecting the preferred shelter characteristics, youth said that being required to meet with case managers (8%), participate in group counseling (7%), and attend individual counseling (6%) would be the least difficult shelter characteristics to follow.

Top Shelter Characteristics Challenging to Follow



Focus group participants shared similar sentiments as those highlighted in the survey findings. When asked what would be important to improve shelters, several said safety and security. Safety was an important feature as some youth had experienced violence in shelters and there were times some of their peers would enter shelter with weapons making them feel very unsafe. One focus group participant expressed a need for more screening and assessment before entering shelter. They explained:

"...because it's not until I get where I'm supposed to go that I'm getting a lot of the medical services and stuff like a psych eval. I feel like that should be done before you're placed in the shelter, before rather than after...It's certain stuff that I think they can do differently to make the shelters better and safer places. So if you know you have people with violent histories, it's like alright, we're going to try to put them somewhere where they're monitored a bit more because it's like alright, we know you come from violence, you may only know violence so what you know is what you're going to bring and we don't need violence in the shelter so I feel like we should start doing, not like profiling, just filtering out, assessing very well who are you, what type of person you are. Let's put you with like-minded people rather than just oh, we're just going to put you in the room with a random person."

[Focus Group 2]

Other participants shared the difficulty of following other rules such as not being able to bring in their own food, curfew, or being required to leave the shelter during the day. Young people working at night faced additional challenges as they have to try and make arrangements to enter shelter after curfew or have to leave in the morning after working late. One participant said, ***"And not even only that, it's also when you come, because I used to work late at night, I used to do the UberEats then I'd come in late night then they would talk about I got to be out of the room by 10 in the morning, I'm like I need my 8 hours, I just got here"*** **[Focus Group 3]**. A few participants shared that it was difficult having to leave shelter during the day because they didn't know what to do or where to go. One participant said that most of the rules were good, but the rule about leaving made it difficult to stay in the shelter:

P1: *"Nah-uh, like the rules is actually straight. But what rule made it difficult can be like getting kicked out. Like getting kicked out then when the time y'all kicking us out in the morning yeah we should... I mean it is what it is, though it's like I guess nobody can work at that time so we can't do nothing..."*

I1: *"Nowhere to go?"*

P1: *"Yeah nowhere to go. Like that type of... and we kids so like y'all sending us out in the morning like we could be looking... if we not finna go to school and we don't got school to go to we just gonna look like we're wandering around and that's... I done pissed up myself before just being outside because I kicked me out like that type of shit. That was just what it was though"*

[Focus Group 5]

Lastly, many youth shared that they can manage many of the challenges associated with staying in a shelter, but what they found difficult was that some of the staff didn't treat them with respect. Two participants shared:

P2: “Just having all the staff just speak with a little more respect, that would feel more comfortable going around and stuff...”

P3: “Yea, that would feel so inviting”

P2: “And then I’d feel more comfortable going to different floors, talking to more staff, trying to build connections with more staff”

[Focus Group 3]

Shelter Characteristics: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q201 If you were/are staying in a shelter, which of the following shelter characteristics would make you feel safer and/or comfortable? Please check all that apply:

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

PREFERRED SHELTER CHARACTERISTICS	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
24 hour security/staff	179	46.6%
Onsite case manager and therapist	132	34.4%
Regular activities within the shelter	119	31.0%
People staying in the shelter are just like me	115	30.0%
Daily check-in with shelter staff	66	17.2%
Supervised visits with pre-screened friends	60	15.6%
Nightly bed checks	58	15.1%
No outside visitors	46	12.0%
Curfew	39	10.2%
If other, please explain	16	4.2%
I choose to skip this question	88	22.9%
Unanswered	6	1.6%

Table 32: What shelter characteristics are youth seeking across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Regular Job Search Activities; Security is like a jail setting; Check up of psychological background, also check up of firearms or weapons.; Visitors Should Be Allowed But Would Need To Be ID; Staff with empathy and understanding of troubled youth; Non problematic people ; Freedom of going places & relax environment.; Cooperative staff and residents ; Donde pueda llevar visitas; Contraband kept out; Better staff that like their jobs; Having some sort of security/stability

3.4.6. Shelter Characteristics Challenging to Follow: Across 384 RHY

Shelter Characteristics Challenging to Follow: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q202 If you were/are staying in a shelter, which of the following characteristics would be the most challenging for you to follow? Please select your top 3.

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

SHELTER CHARACTERISTICS CHALLENGING TO FOLLOW	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Curfew	170	44.3%
No outside visitors	75	19.5%
Required to leave the shelter during the day	68	17.7%
Required religious service	62	16.2%
Nightly bed checks	56	14.6%
Daily check-in with shelter staff	51	13.3%
Giving a portion of income to shelter for savings	47	12.2%
Required group activities	38	9.9%
Required shelter meetings	36	9.4%
Required appointments with case manager	29	7.6%
Required group counseling	28	7.3%
Required individual counseling	21	5.5%
I choose to skip this question	93	24.2%
Unanswered	9	2.3%

Table 33: What shelter characteristics are challenging for youth to follow across 384 surveyed youth.

3.4.7. Shelter Wellness Activities: Across 384 RHY

The majority of survey participants said they were interested in participating in various activities if offered at shelter (see [Table 34](#)). Fifty-five percent of youth reported interest in playing video games and 43% were interested in sports or exercise classes. Artistic expression was also something youth would want to engage in, with 49% wanting art classes, 38% open mic night, and 41% museum visits. A few focus group participants shared interest in participating in different activities and one participant described classes contributing to an overall positive experience at the shelter where she was staying:

“There are even yoga and art classes here, music. And here they understand you so much. And it’s not the same as your family, but you don’t feel alone. You’re always going to feel how nice they are, how friendly, the people, from the door when you arrive until your room.”

[Focus Group 4]

Shelter Wellness and Hobby Activities: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q204 If you were/are staying in a shelter, would you be interested in any of the following wellness/hobby activities? Please check all that apply.

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

SHELTER WELLNESS ACTIVITIES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Video games	212	55.2%
Art classes (pottery, painting, drawing)	188	49.0%
Sports/exercise classes (basketball, yoga, Zumba ...)	167	43.5%
Museum visits	159	41.4%
Open mic night	146	38.0%
If other, please explain	7	1.8%
I choose to skip this question	77	20.1%
Unanswered	8	2.1%

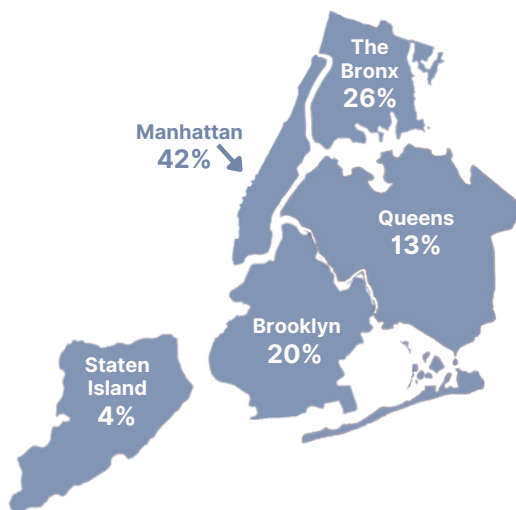
Table 34: Shelter wellness and hobby activities youth are interested in across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: -99; Martial arts; Movies; Music classes; Tutoring; Pole dancing

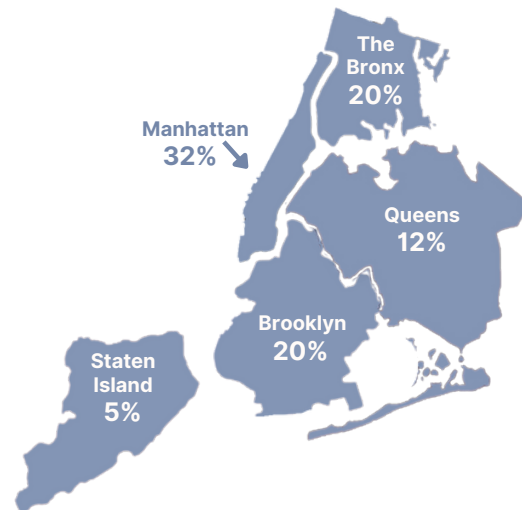
3.4.8. Borough(s) Youth Currently are Receiving Services: Across 384 RHY

To learn which boroughs participants would prefer to receive services, they were asked to identify which boroughs they are currently receiving services and which ones they would prefer to receive services (see [Tables 35 and 36](#)). The least popular boroughs were Staten Island and Queens, with 5.2% of participants preferring services in Staten Island and 12% in Queens. The majority of participants prefer receiving services in Manhattan (31.8%), and Brooklyn and the Bronx were tied at 19.8% of youth preferring to receive services in those boroughs.

Boroughs Currently Receiving Services



Boroughs Preferred to Receive Services



Borough Receiving Services: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q197 Which boroughs are you currently receiving services in? Please check all that apply.

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100%.

BOROUGH CURRENTLY RECEIVING SERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Manhattan	160	41.7%
The Bronx	101	26.3%
Brooklyn	76	19.8%
Queens	48	12.5%
Staten island	15	3.9%
I choose to skip this question	58	15.1%
If other, please explain	7	1.8%

Table 35: Borough(s) youth are currently receiving services in across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: Georgia; None; NYC ALL DAY B!

3.4.9. Borough(s) Youth Prefer to Receive Services (added after survey was initially deployed): Across 384 RHY

Preferred Borough for Receiving Services: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q335 Which of the boroughs would you prefer to receive services in? Please check all that apply.

Note: This question was introduced in June 2022. Therefore, many of the 135 '-99' responses come from earlier surveys, and thus the percentages reflect only a proportion of 384 RHY. As youth could select multiple responses, there were a total of 524 responses across categories. The percentages are based on 384 unique youth, so they may not sum to 100%.

BOROUGH PREFER TO RECEIVE SERVICES	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Manhattan	122	31.8%
Brooklyn	76	19.8%
The Bronx	76	19.8%
Queens	46	12.0%
Staten island	20	5.2%
If other, please explain	2	0.5%
I choose to skip this question	37	9.6%
Unanswered	145	37.8%

Table 36: Borough(s) youth would prefer to receive services in across 384 surveyed youth.

Other Category Responses: NYC ALL DAY B

3.5. Comparison of Services Across Demographic Groups

RHY programs serve a diverse youth population and come to the programs with a variety of experiences, such as histories of work exploitation or being kicked out of their home. To help understand whether service needs varied by groups of young people, we explore the difference in requested services across the study participants broken down by several demographic groups. While each young person is unique in experience and service needs, the findings from the comparisons below highlight areas where youth from different backgrounds may need additional support.

Each plot below shows the proportion of youth expressing interest in 13 services within their respective demographic groups. Youth who did not respond with 'Yes' or 'No' (i.e., those who skipped the question) are excluded from each comparison. Additionally, the statistical significance of differences in these proportions was tested, except for Age and Race/Ethnicity. In each plot, the y-axis lists the 13 services, and the x-axis lists the different groups being compared. The intersection of a service and a group represents the proportion of youth in that group who expressed interest in the service. Services with a statistically significant difference between groups are highlighted in blue and enclosed in a box. For pairwise comparisons, an upward arrow indicates that the 'Yes' group had a higher percentage of youth interested in the service.

Desired Services and Needs: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: *Displays the desired services of youth (Q322,Q323,Q324,Q325,Q326,Q327,Q328,Q329,Q330,Q331,Q332,Q333,Q334)*

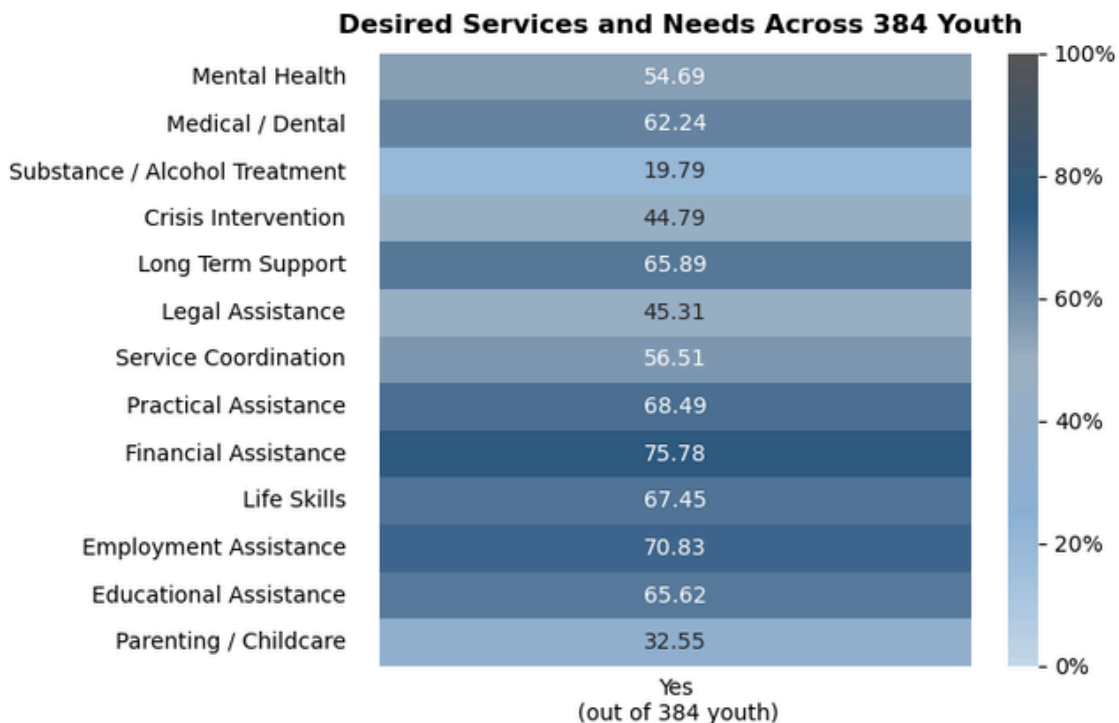


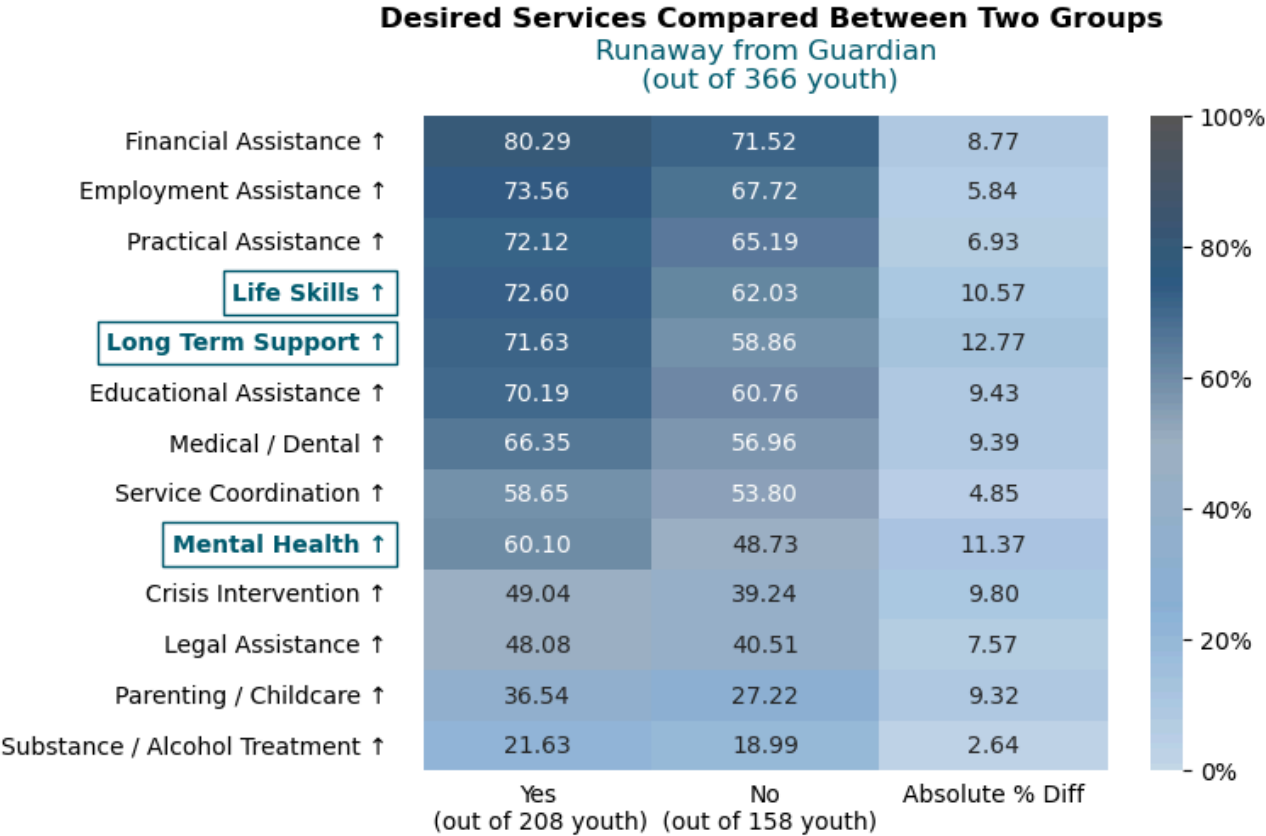
Figure 20: Percentage of youth desiring each of the 13 services across 384 surveyed youth.

3.5.1. Run away from Guardian

Out of 366 youth who responded to Q18, 208 youth indicated they have at some point in time run away from their parent or guardian’s home, while 158 indicated they have not. Youth who said they had run away from their parent’s or guardian’s home expressed a greater need for all 13 services compared to the youth who said they had never run away from home. The three services with the greatest statistical difference between the two groups were Life Skills (10.6%), Long Term Housing and Shelter Support (12.8%), and Mental Health Services (11.4%), indicating that youth who have run away from home may have a greater need for these services than those who have not.

Service Comparisons Between Youth Who Ran Away From Guardians and Those Who Did Not: Across 366 RHY

Survey Question: Q18 Have you ever run away from your parent or guardian’s home?



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the two-sided proportions z-test with $\alpha = 0.05$

↑ indicates services with a higher percentage of youth in the Yes group compared to the No group

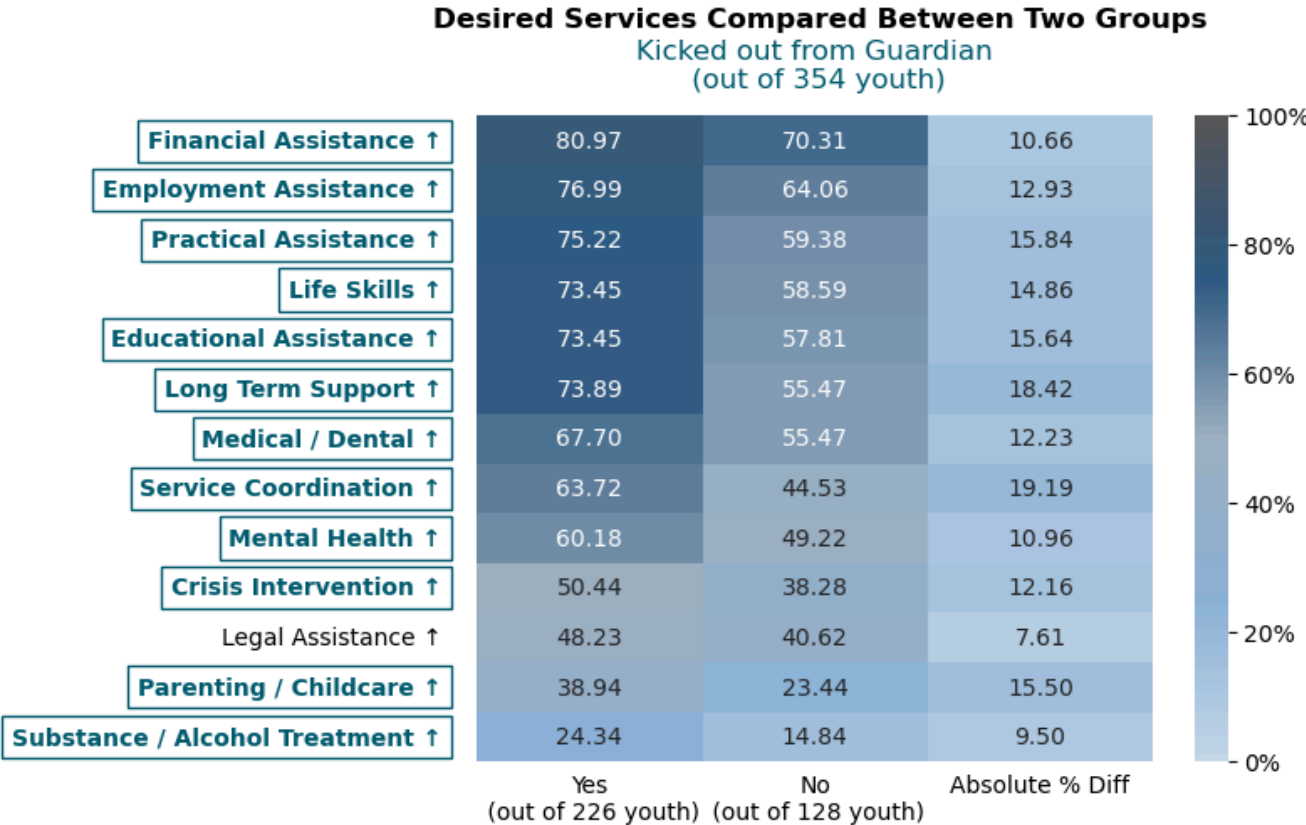
Figure 21: Comparison of desired services between youth who have run away from guardian and those who have not across 366 youth.

3.5.2. Kicked out by Guardian

Out of 354 youth who answered the question, 226 youth indicated they have at some point in time been kicked out by a parent or guardian, while 128 indicated they have not. Youth who said they had been kicked out by a parent or guardian expressed a greater need for all 13 services compared to the youth who said they had not. There were statistically significant differences between the two groups of youth for all services except Legal Assistance. While there may be overlap among youth who have run away and been kicked out, the findings suggest those who have a history with being kicked out expressed more needs across all 13 services in comparison to youth who have not shared this experience.

Service Comparisons Between Youth Who Were Kicked Out by Guardians and Those Who Were Not : Across 354 RHY

Survey Question: Q20 Have you ever been kicked out of your home by your parent or guardian?



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the two-sided proportions z-test with $\alpha = 0.05$

† indicates services with a higher percentage of youth in the Yes group compared to the No group

Figure 22: Comparison of desired services between youth who have been kicked out by guardian and those who have not across 354 youth.

3.5.3. Human Trafficking Indicators

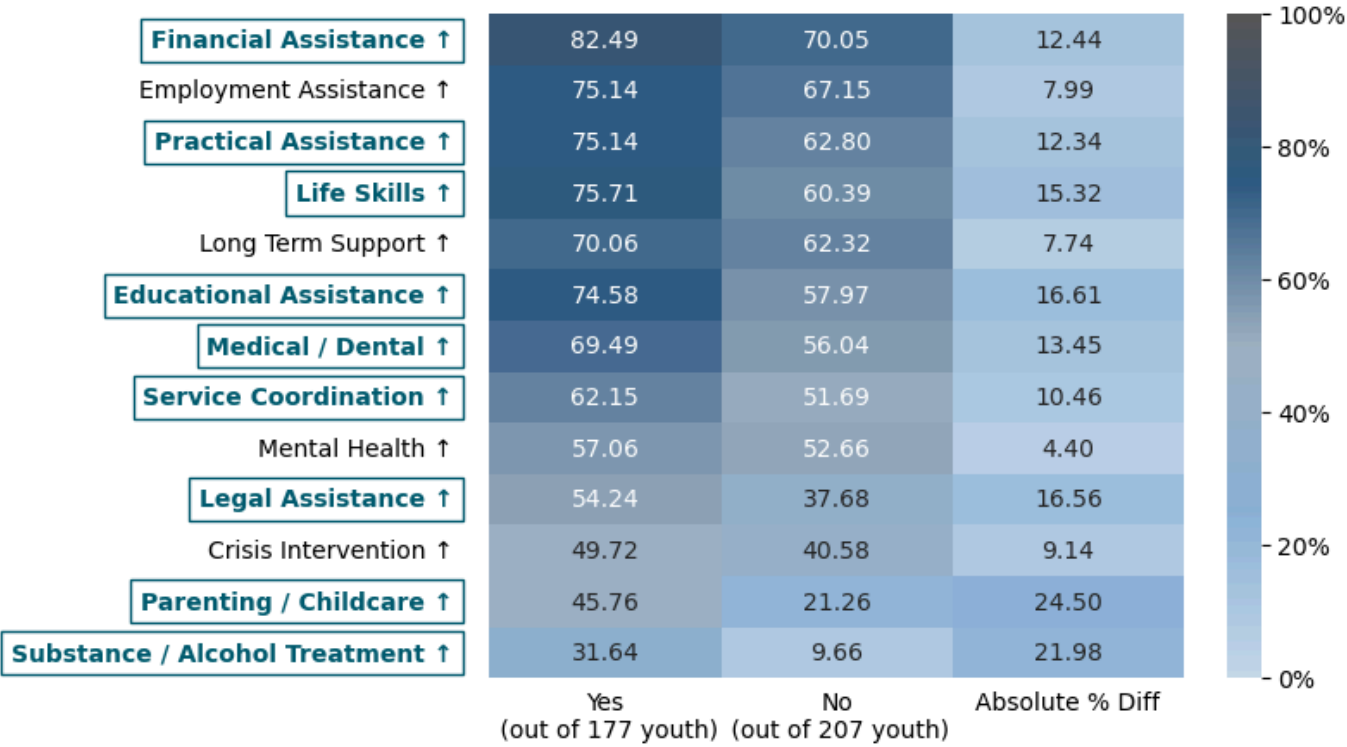
To learn if youth who reported experiencing at least one of the six human trafficking (HT) indicators (n=177) demonstrated different service needs than youth who did not experience at least one of the indicators (n=207), a comparison of service needs between the two groups was conducted. Among youth with at least one HT indicator, all 13 services were reported as needed at a proportionally higher rate compared to those without any HT indicators. A majority (nine) of the services were also found to be of a statistically greater need among those with at least one HT indicator. The two services with the largest difference in need between the two groups were Parenting/Childcare (24.5%) and Substance and Alcohol Abuse Services (22%).

Service Comparisons Between Youth With At Least One Indicator of Human Trafficking and Those Without: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Summed number of HT Questions answered by each Youth (Q24,Q25,Q26,Q28,Q29,Q30)

Notes: Youth who skipped or did not answer questions related to HT are included in the “No” category.

Desired Services Compared Between Two Groups
At Least One Human Trafficking Indicator
(out of 384 youth)



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the two-sided proportions z-test with $\alpha = 0.05$

† indicates services with a higher percentage of youth in the Yes group compared to the No group

Figure 23: Comparison of desired services between youth who have at least one indicator of human trafficking and those who have not across 384 youth.

3.5.4. Mental Health Diagnosis

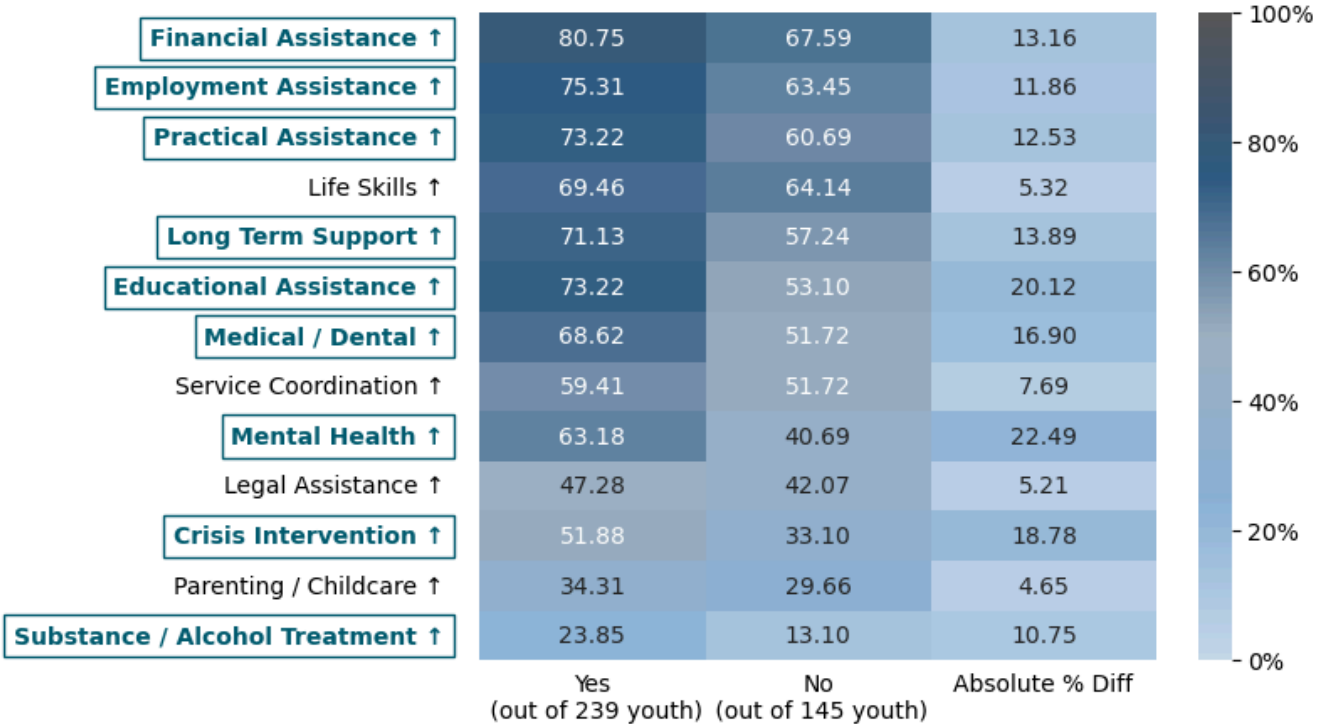
Youth with mental health conditions often require additional support and services. To learn if youth with multiple self-reported mental health diagnoses had different service needs, a comparison between the youth who disclosed having two or more mental health diagnoses (n=239) and those who reported having one or no mental health diagnosis was conducted. Youth with two or more diagnoses reported a greater interest in all 13 services than the youth with one or no mental health diagnosis. In addition, interest in 9 of the 13 services were statistically higher for youth with two or more diagnoses, with the largest difference being a need for mental health services (22.5%), educational assistance (21%), and crisis intervention services (18.8%).

Service Comparisons between Youth with Two or More Mental Health Diagnoses (Self-reported) and Those Without: Across 384 RHY

Survey Question: Q17 Sometimes health or mental health conditions can affect our ability to find a safe place to live, stay in school, or find a job. Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following: Anxiety, Depression, PTSD, ADHD, Bipolar, Learning disability, Schizophrenia, Physical disability, Autism, TBI.

Notes: Youth who skipped or did not answer questions related to mental health are included in the “No” category.

Desired Services Compared Between Two Groups
Two or More Mental Health Diagnoses (self-reported)
(out of 384 youth)



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the two-sided proportions z-test with $\alpha = 0.05$

↑ indicates services with a higher percentage of youth in the Yes group compared to the No group

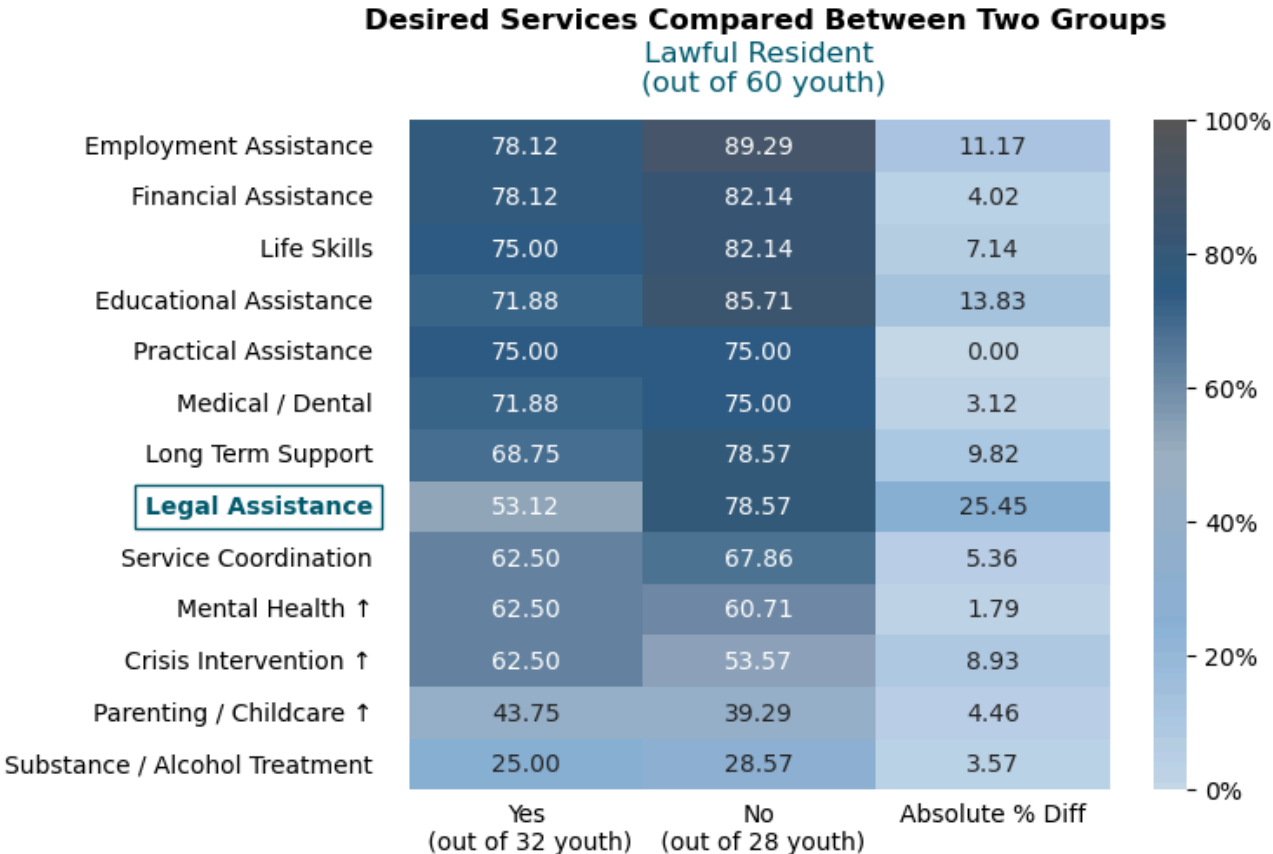
Figure 24: Comparison of desired services between youth who have two or more mental health diagnoses (self-reported) and those who have not across 384 youth.

3.5.5. Immigration Status and Citizenship

Sixty participants reported that they were not born in the United States. Of these young people, 32 youth said that they were a U.S citizen or lawful permanent resident, and 28 indicated they were not. A comparison of the two groups was conducted to identify any differences in needs for the 13 services. There was an overall larger indicated service need for those who were a U.S citizen or lawful permanent resident (LPR), compared to those who had not obtained legal status, possibly indicating that after youth obtain legal status they are interested in receiving other services, such as employment and educational assistance as they would qualify for more opportunities. Of the services, only legal assistance was statistically significant as a need for youth without status, which is expected as they would be in greater need for legal assistance. There was also a slightly greater need for mental health, crisis intervention and parenting / childcare services among youth without legal status compared to those who had obtained citizen or LPR status.

Service Comparisons between Immigrant Youth With Lawful Residency and Those Without : Across 60 RHY

Survey Question: Q13 Are you a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident (with a green card)?



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the two-sided proportions z-test with $\alpha = 0.05$

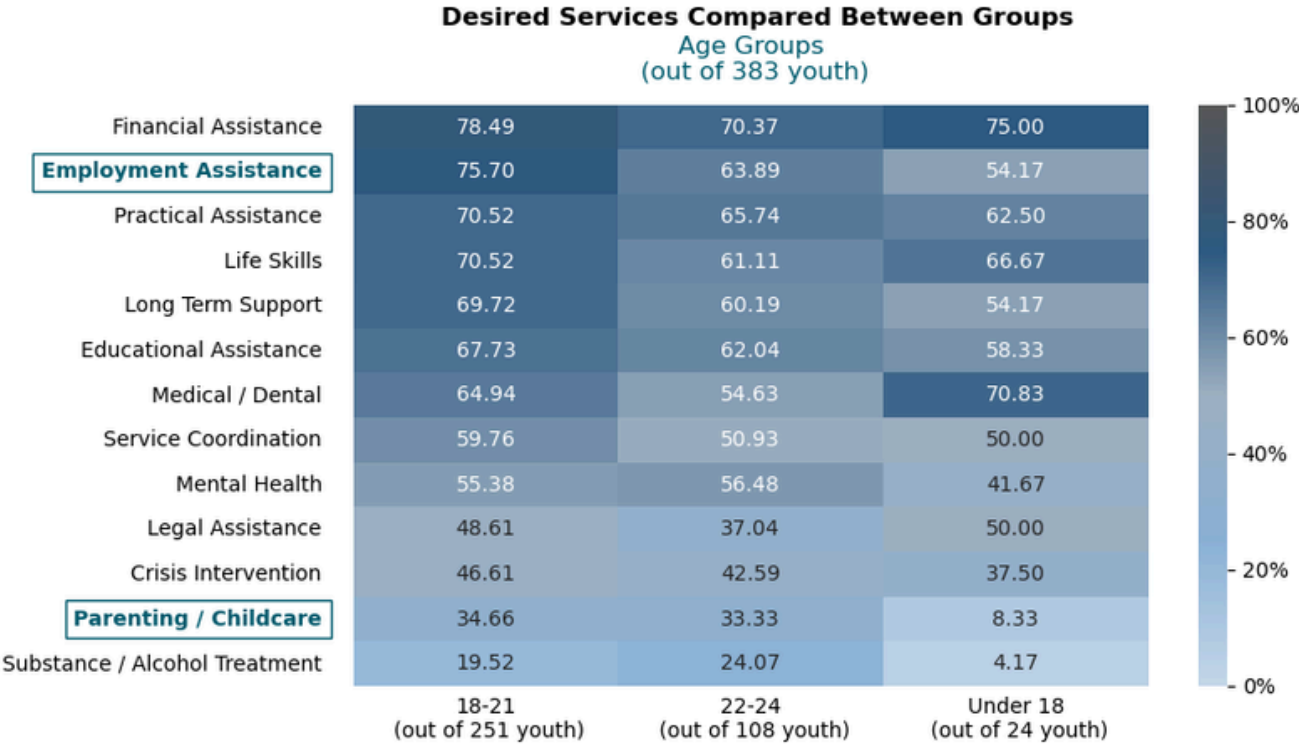
† indicates services with a higher percentage of youth in the Yes group compared to the No group

Figure 25: Comparison of desired services between immigrant youth with lawful permanent residency and those who have not across 60 youth.

3.5.6. Age (group comparison)

A comparison of service needs across age groups: under 18, 18-21 and 22-24, was conducted to identify differences in service interests based on developmental stages. It was found that across these three groups there was a statistically significant difference in the two older groups' need for employment assistance and parenting/childcare services. Youth under 18 years of age indicated a 5-16% higher need for medical / dental services compared to their 18-21 and 22-24 youth counterparts.

Service Comparisons between Age Groups : Across 383 RHY
 Survey Question: Q2 How old are you?



Services enclosed and bolded are found to be significantly different between groups using the chi-squared contingency table test with $\alpha = 0.05$

* The statistical tests for Parenting / Childcare and Substance / Alcohol Treatment services for the age group under 18 have less than 5 youth and may require additional testing

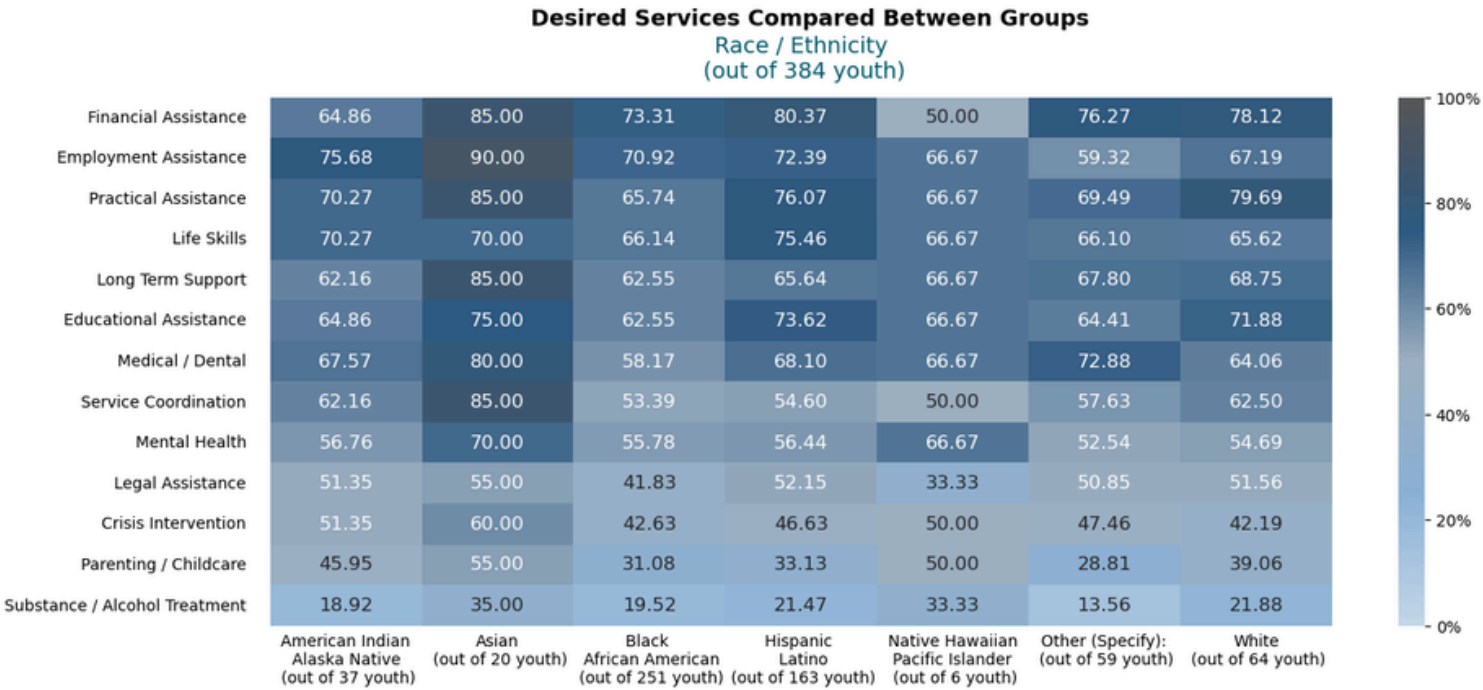
Figure 26: Comparison of desired services between different age groups across 383 youth.

3.5.7. Race / Ethnicity (group comparison)

RHY can select more than one response. For this question (set of questions) there were a total of 466 responses across categories, however, the percentages are out of the 384 unique youth. Therefore, percentages may not sum to 100. No statistical tests were performed for comparing race/ethnicity.

Service Comparisons between Different Racial Identities: Across 384 RHY Survey Question: Q6 What is your race?

Notes: Percentages are calculated based on the 384 unique youth. However, since RHY can select more than one response, the total percentages may exceed 100



Youth may select more than one race/ethnicity and the difference between each group were not tested for significance.

Figure 27: Comparison of desired services between different racial identities across 384 youth.

4. Conclusions

The purpose of this study is to learn from unstably housed youth which services would be most helpful to them to better connect them to services that best fit their needs. Young people who are able to access services they want and best fit their needs, leads to longer service engagement and increased safety, thereby decreasing vulnerability to trafficking. The 384 youth in the study provided their insight on the services and housing they most want and need. The following recommendations are based on the feedback they provided through the surveys and focus groups.

Recommendations for Increasing Services Youth Would Find Helpful

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND ACCESS TO WORKSHOPS AND ACTIVITIES

- Wellness and hobby activities
- Educational: mental health and stress management; substance and alcohol use; know-your-rights; employment related
- Life skills: time management; communication; budgeting
- Career talks so youth are exposed to different professions

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AND ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

- Employment pipeline opportunities for youth and provide the support necessary for them to successfully maintain their jobs
- Ongoing support for youth to maintain employment (i.e. coaching, problem solving)
- Resources for more employment related services for youth on site and direct linkages to employment services in NYC
- Direct linkages to employment services in NYC
- Paid internships – internal and external
- Regular assessment of employment experiences



INCREASE ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

- Resources for mental health related services, particularly therapists and psychiatrists with expertise in trauma and working with youth
- Emotional support for youth accessing medical care
- Counselors with expertise in substance and alcohol abuse (i.e. CASAC)

INCREASE SHELTER/HOUSING SUPPORT

- Resources for additional long-term shelter options while going through the permanent housing process
- Ongoing advocacy for more affordable housing for RHY
- Security enhancements
- Wraparound support on-site

INCREASE CAPACITY OF GENERAL SERVICE PROVISION

- Coordination of services and relationships with programs outside of RHY providers
- Additional training and support to client facing staff to ensure positive communication between staff and youth, as well as the delivery of important information about available services and processes (i.e. housing application process)



References

1. AFC (2023). Student Homelessness In New York City, 2022–23. Advocates for Children of New York.
2. Dank, M., Yahner, J., Madden, K., Bañuelos, I., Yu, L., Ritchie, A., Mora, M., & Conner, B. (2015). *Surviving the Streets of New York: Experiences of LGBTQ Youth, YMSM, and YWSW Engaged in Survival Sex*. Washington D.C.: Urban Institute
3. Dank, M. L., Yahner, J., Yu, L., Vasquez-Noriega, C., Gelatt, J., Pergamit, M. R., & Center, J. P. (2017). Pretesting a human trafficking screening tool in the child welfare and runaway and homeless youth systems. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
4. DiGuseppi, G., Semborski, S., Rhoades, H., Goldbach, J., & Henwood, B.F. (2022). Perceived safety in community and service settings among young adults experiencing homelessness: Differences by sexual and gender identity. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 70, 340–351.
5. HUD (2022). *New York City Youth Count 2021*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
6. Kort-Butler, L.A., & Tyler, K.A. (2012). A cluster analysis of service utilization and incarceration among homeless youth. *Social Science Research*, 41, 612–623.
7. McKormick, K.A., Chatham, A., Klodnick, V.V., Schoenfeld, E.A., & Cohen, D.A. (2023). Mental health service experiences among transition-age youth: Interpersonal continuums that influence engagement in care. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 40, 525–536.
8. Middleton, J., Edwards, E., Roe-Sepowitz, D., Inman, E., Frey, L.M., & Gattis, M.N. (2024). Adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and homelessness: A critical examination of the association between specific aces and sex trafficking among homeless youth in Kentuckiana. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 10(1), 121-134.
9. Morton, M. H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G. M. (2017). *Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
10. Murphy, L.T. (2016). *Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth: A Ten-City Study*. New Orleans: Modern Slavery Research Project of Loyola University.
11. OCFS (2020). *Runaway and Homeless Youth: Annual Report*. Office of Children and Family Services, New York State.
12. Petry, L., Hill, C., Milburn, N., & Rice, E. (2022). Who is couch-surfing and who is on the streets? Disparities among racial and sexual minority youth in experiences of homelessness. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 70, 743-750.
13. Prock, K.A., & Kennedy, A.C. (2020). Characteristics, experiences, and service utilization patterns of homeless youth in a transitional living program: Differences by LGBQ identity. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 116, 105176.

13. Prock, K.A., & Kennedy, A.C. (2020). Characteristics, experiences, and service utilization patterns of homeless youth in a transitional living program: Differences by LGBQ identity. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 116, 105176.
14. Ratliff, G.A, Harvey, T.L., Jeffcoat, N., Sarabia, R., Yang, J.O., Lightfoot, M., Adams, S., Lund, I., & Auerswald, C.L. (2023). The deployment of discretionary power in the prevention and enactment of structural violence against young people experiencing homelessness. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 141, 106237.
15. Semborski, S., Redline, B., Rhoades, H., & Henwood, B. (2020). Provider perspectives of housing programs for young adults experiencing homelessness. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 112, 104898.
16. Tan, J.Y., Ratliff, G.A., Lund, I., Adams, S., Auerswald, C., & Lightfoot, M. (2023). Positive and negative experiences with supportive services and programming: Gaps and recommendations from youth experiencing homelessness. *Youth & Society*, 1-19.
17. Tyler, K. A., & Ray, C. M. (2019). Risk and protective factors for substance use among youth experiencing homelessness. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 107, 104548.
18. Tyler, K. A., & Schmitz, R. M. (2018). A comparison of risk factors for various forms of trauma in the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual homeless youth. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 19(4), 431-443.
19. Yoshioka-Maxwell, A. (2022). Experiences of abuse: Homeless former foster youth and their experiences of abuse in out-of-home care. *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 40 (3), 787-796.

Appendix A

Methodology

Objective 1: Better understand the housing and support service-related needs and wants of unhoused youth in NYC.

We collected data from 384 unhoused youth in NYC about their demographics, as well as about their homelessness experience, human trafficking experience, mental health situation, education level, and employment situation.

Additionally, we collected data on the type of support services youth want to receive. Then, we use this collected data to inform demographic and service needs profiles of unhoused youth in NYC.

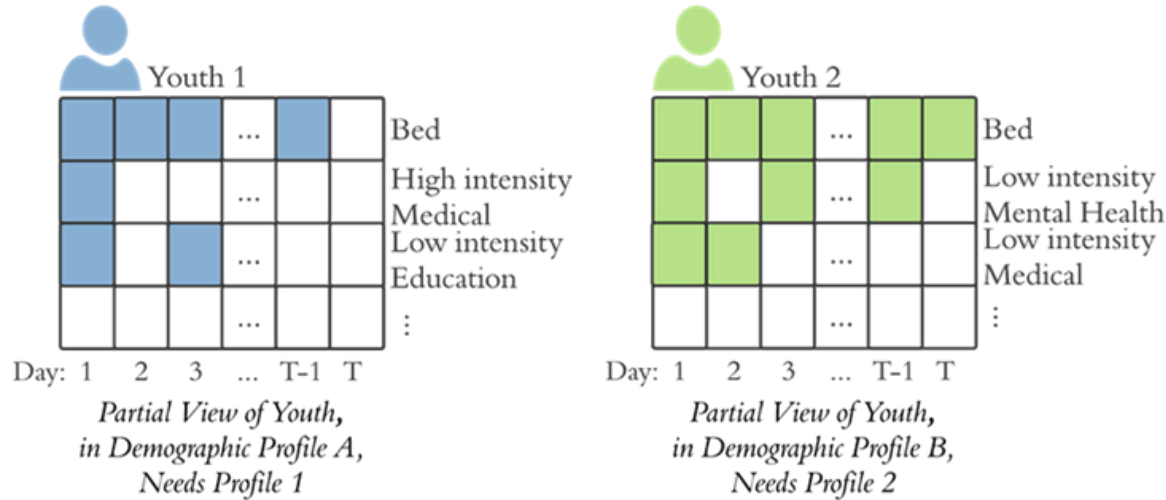


Figure A1: Examples of needs profiles for two youth who belong to two different demographics where shading indicates different demographics groups.

Objective 2: Better understand the existing capacity, type and availability of housing and support services.

We supplemented our data collection with structured interviews and surveys we conducted with five RHY organizations that fund, support, and provide housing and support services to RHY in NYC. The RHY organizations we interviewed provide different types of programs to RHY such as crisis/emergency, transitional independent living (TIL), and long-term housing.

These interviews and surveys revealed the existing capacities, resources, and nature of different services provided in NYC, as well as:

- demographics of the youth served,
- types of services offered by each organization,
- number of resources available for different services,
- average length of stay of youth, and
- services outsourced through referrals to other RHY organizations.

We use this collected data to inform the service profiles of RHY organizations.

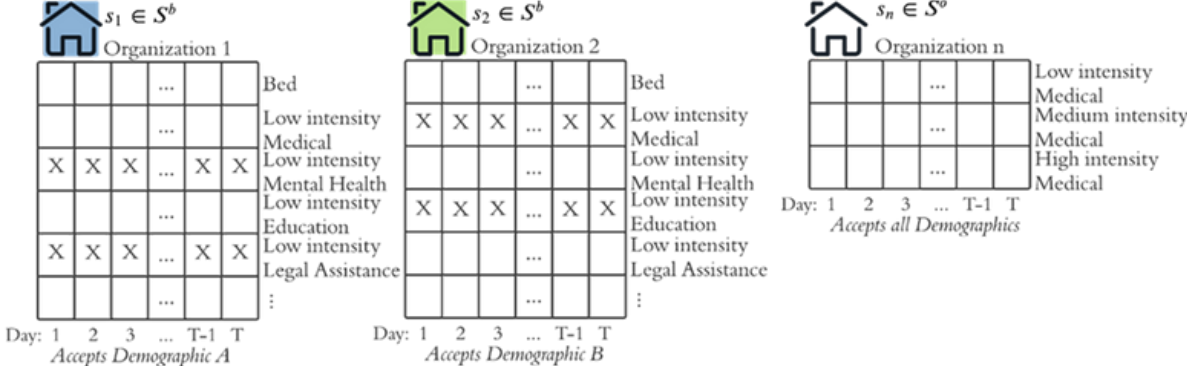


Figure A2: Illustrative example of sample RHY organizations that provide housing and support services to unstably housed youth, where X indicates the unavailable resources.

Objective 3: Project the required capacity to meet the collective needs of unhoused youth in NYC.

During our primary data collection process, we developed an optimization model to project the cost minimizing capacity to deploy to meet the collective needs of RHY in NYC. This model is presented as a case study for a group of transitional and independent living organizations in the IISE Transactions article, [“Improving access to housing and supportive services for runaway and homeless youth: Reducing vulnerability to human trafficking in New York City”](#).

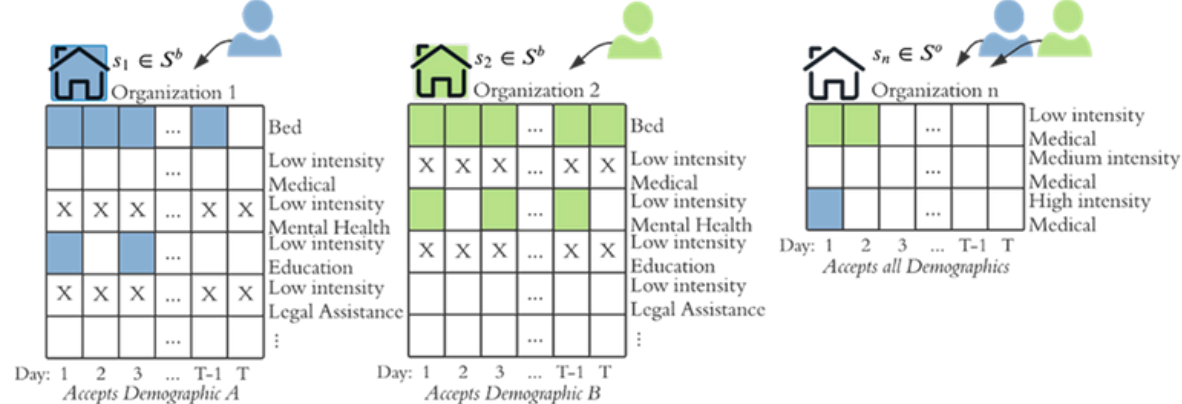


Figure A3: Youth are matched with RHY organization 1 and 2 respectively, considering the youth demographics and the accepted demographic at the RHY organizations.

The *IISE Transactions* study introduces a unique mixed-integer linear optimization formulation that identifies the cost-minimizing allocation of service resources to meet the collective needs of RHY, shown in Figure A3.

This model skillfully balances several dynamic factors crucial for supporting RHY. It accounts for the:

- unpredictable arrival patterns of youth, recognizing that the demand for services can fluctuate significantly,
- varied durations for which these youth require different services, ranging from short-term emergency aid to longer-term care,
- time-sensitive aspects of service delivery, recognizing that the effectiveness of some services is heavily dependent on when they are provided,
- periodic nature of service provision, understanding that certain supports are not continuous but are needed at specific intervals.

The findings of this case study show that there is a need to expand the TIL housing capacity in NYC. This model presents this as a capacity expansion to existing RHY organizations (as opposed to adding completely new organizations); however, the results clearly indicate that more funding for RHY organizations is needed in NYC. When the data analysis is complete, we will complement and inform this optimization model with the surveys of RHY and interviews with service providers. This will ensure that the multi-step approach is grounded in real-world insights and reflects the community-based perspective.

Objective 4: Identify a capacity deployment strategy that maximizes the societal benefit-to-cost-ratio.

Our findings from Objective 2 showed that the demand for housing and support services greatly exceeds existing capacity. Therefore, the optimal deployment requires more capacity than is feasible to add at one time. To address this issue, we identified an actionable capacity expansion plan that details how to implement the capacity deployment over time.

We developed an optimization framework that, at any decision juncture, finds the best bang-for-the-buck: the marginal deployment of capacity beyond the status quo. We estimate benefits accrued for RHY through successful shelter placement versus the costs of expanding resources in existing shelters, building new shelters, and assigning youth to those shelters. The preprint for this study can be found [here](#).

Appendix B

Subservice Intensity Levels Across 13 Support Services

The intensity levels were determined by the overall estimated intensity of resources required to provide youth with the selected subservice. The levels range from 1 to 3, from low intensity to high intensity respectively.

Service Category	Service Definition	Intensity
<i>Mental Health Services (Q226)</i>	I would like some information about mental health and/or stress management	1
	I would like to be able to talk to a counselor once a week	2
	I would like to talk to a therapist every week and/or receive medication to help manage my feelings	3
	I would like to be referred to an in-patient facility	1
	I would like to receive group counseling	2
<i>Mental Health Services (Q228)</i>	Group session	1
	One-on-one time with a counselor	2
	Both group sessions and one-on-one	3
	One-on-one time with a psychiatrist	3
	Depends on the circumstances and how I feel that day	3
<i>Medical and Dental Care (such as Access to HIV Testing, pregnancy testing)</i>	I am feeling ok, but I need a medical and/or a dental check up	1
	I am concerned I might be pregnant, or have an STI and need testing	2
	I have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and I am scared I have a major health issue	3
	I am injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with me to the clinic/hospital	3
	I need surgery and need assistance finding a doctor and paying for the surgery	3
<i>Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment</i>	I would like information about drugs and alcohol abuse	1
	I would like information about how to use drugs and alcohol safely until I am ready to stop	1
	I would like to speak to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor about my	2
	I would like to be admitted to a treatment program	3

Service Category	Service Definition	Intensity
<i>Crisis and 24- Hour Response Services (such as emergency shelter, emergency mental health)</i>	I am feeling really stressed and need to talk to someone this week	1
	I don't know where I'm staying this week and need help getting into shelter	2
	I am in an unsafe situation and need safety planning and leaving the situation	3
	I am feeling suicidal and/or want to harm myself and need immediate assistance	3
<i>Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services (transitional/long term placement or reunification with family)</i>	I need help looking for an apartment or applying for housing assistance	1
	I need housing I can stay in for at least a year so I can prepare to move into an apartment	2
	I have run out of shelter options and need a long-term place to stay in the next couple of months	3
<i>Legal Assistance (immigration, documentation assistance, obtaining identification)</i>	I need one or two sessions of legal counseling to discuss my rights in the workplace, my rights in housing court, obtaining a name change, or help to obtain legal ID	1
	I need help understanding what is on my criminal record or clearing up open warrants	1
	I need help to get an order of protection or help with assistance with getting back my public benefits	2
	I need help going to court to defend me in court, seek legal immigration status, or prosecute someone	3
<i>Service Coordination (aka System-Based Victim Advocacy - assistance with referrals to other services such as DHS, housing advocacy)</i>	I need help with a family court	3
	I need referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs	1
	I need referrals and advocacy for public assistance	2
<i>Practical Assistance (food, personal hygiene, shelter, clothing, basic necessities, transportation)</i>	I need referrals and advocacy for shelter and housing	3
	I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a month	1
	I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a week	2
<i>Financial assistance (utilities, assistance with rent)</i>	I need help with transportation, food, clothing and hygiene items several times a week	3
	Financial assistance 0-2 times per month	1
	Financial assistance 1-2 times per week	2
	Financial assistance 3-5 times per week	3

Service Category	Service Definition	Intensity
<i>Life Skills (Financial Literacy, Taking Public Transportation, Time Management)</i>	I need help learning how to manage my responsibilities and appointments	1
	I need help learning how to cook meals and do laundry	2
	I need help to work on my interpersonal skills	2
	I need help learning different technology	2
	I need help learning healthy ways to stay safe	2
	I need help learning how to develop healthy relationships	2
<i>Employment Assistance (job placement, resume help, career counseling)</i>	I need help opening a bank account, cashing checks, and learning how to manage a budget	3
	I need to learn how to communicate professionally with my supervisor and coworkers	1
	I need help with job training and placement	2
<i>Educational Assistance (GED, vocational training, college applications)</i>	I need help with resume and job searching strategies	3
	I need help signing up for my GED/vocational training, or help filling out my college applications	1
	I need help filling out financial assistance forms for college/vocational school	2
	I need some tutoring for the GED/vocational training/college entrance exams	2
<i>Childcare or Parenting Help</i>	I need help paying for my GED/vocational training/college	3
	I need parenting classes or coaching	1
	I need to complete parenting classes or coaching as part of a family court matter	1
	I need occasional childcare	2
	I need full time childcare	3

Appendix C

Supplementary Tables, Visuals and Analysis

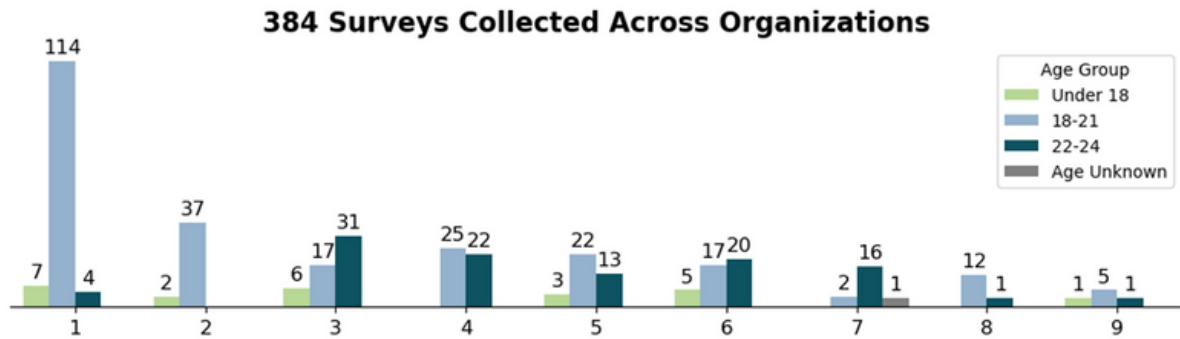


Figure C1: Age of youth surveyed at shelter organizations across 384 youth.

GENDER IDENTITY	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Cis-gender male	146	38.0%
Cis-gender female	102	26.6%
Non-binary	40	10.4%
Transgender female	26	6.8%
Transgender male	22	5.7%
Genderqueer	5	1.3%
Other (specify):	16	4.2%
I choose to skip this question	27	7.0%

Table C1: Gender Identity of the 384 surveyed youth.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION GROUPED	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Heterosexual/Straight	184	47.9%
Bisexual	64	16.7%
Pansexual	41	10.7%
Gay	32	8.3%
Queer	18	4.7%
Lesbian	15	3.9%
Asexual	5	2.9%
Questioning	4	2.6%
Other (Specify)	10	1.3%
I choose to skip this question	11	1.0%

Table C2: Sexual Orientation (Grouped) of the 384 surveyed youth.

STATE GREW UP IN	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
New York	190	64.4%
New jersey	19	6.4%
Florida	15	5.1%
Georgia	10	3.4%
Pennsylvania	8	2.7%
Massachusetts	4	1.4%
Maryland	4	1.4%
North Carolina	4	1.4%
Virginia	4	1.4%
Texas	3	1.0%
Ohio	3	1.0%
South Carolina	3	1.0%
Connecticut	3	1.0%
California	2	0.7%
Michigan	2	0.7%
I choose to skip this question	1	0.3%
Alabama	1	0.3%
Maine	1	0.3%
Washington	1	0.3%
Arizona	1	0.3%
Colorado	1	0.3%
Wisconsin	1	0.3%
Idaho	1	0.3%
Unanswered (-99)	13	4.4%

Table C3: State youth grew up in across 295 youth who grew up in the United States.

ECONOMY TYPE	FORMS OF WORK
Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another type of job in a restaurant or café • Working in a retail store (clothing store, grocery store, convenience store, at the mall, etc.) • Office work (answering phones, filing, etc.) • Serving food in a restaurant or café • Delivering newspapers, restaurant food, groceries or other things to other people’s homes • Babysitting • Cleaning homes • Doing construction work or other home repairs (painting, plumbing, electricity, etc.) • Doing nails or braiding hair • Mowing lawns, shoveling sidewalks, or other yard work • Selling items door-to-door • Stripping
Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking for change or donations on the street or in the subway • Trading sex for money, clothes, shelter, or other things • Selling items, dancing, or performing on the street or in the subways • Participating in sexual videos or photos for money, clothes, shelter, or other things

Table C4: Forms of work experience across 384 surveyed youth.

MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSIS	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
Anxiety	222	57.8%
Depression	209	54.4%
PTSD	143	37.2%
ADHD	143	37.2%
Bipolar	97	25.3%
Learning Disability	74	19.3%
Schizophrenia	28	7.3%
Physical Disability	28	7.3%
Autism	24	6.3%
TBI	9	2.3%

Table C5: Self-reported mental health diagnosis across 384 surveyed youth.

Appendix D

Survey Questions

Section A: About You (8 Questions)

Q2: How old are you?

(Text response, numerical responses only)

Q3: How do you identify your gender?

- Cis-gender Male (1)
- Cis-gender Female (2)
- Transgender Male (3)
- Transgender Female (4)
- Non-binary (5)
- Genderqueer (6)
- Intersex (7)
- Other (Specify): (8) _____
- I choose to skip this question (9)

Q4: What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual/straight (1)
- Gay (2)
- Lesbian (3)
- Bisexual (4)
- Queer (5)
- Questioning (6)
- Asexual (7)
- Pansexual (8)
- Other (Specify): (9) _____
- I choose to skip this question (10)

Q5: Are you Hispanic, Latino or of Spanish origin?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q6 What is your race?

You may select more than one.

- American Indian/Alaska Native (1)
- Asian (2)
- Black / African American (3)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (4)
- White (5)
- Other (Specify): (6) _____
- I choose to skip this question (7)

Q7 Do you have any children of your own, or are you or your partner currently pregnant?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Do you have any children of your own, or are you or your partner currently pregnant? = Yes

Q8 How many children do you have (including any that are yet to be born)?

(Text response, numerical responses only)

Q292 Over the course of your life, how long have you been homeless or unstably housed?

- 48 hours or less (9)
- Between 2 days and 1 week (10)
- Between 1 week and 1 month (11)
- Between 1 month and 6 months (12)
- Between 6 months and 1 year (13)
- More than 1 year (14)
- I do not consider myself homeless or unstably housed (15)
- I choose to skip this question (16)

Section B: School (2 Questions)

Q9 Are you currently in school?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q10 What is the highest level of education you have finished?

- Did not complete HS or receive a GED (9)
- Currently in high school (19)
- Currently in a GED program (18)
- High school diploma (10)
- GED (11)
- Attended some college (12)
- 2 year, vocational or technical degree(13)
- Bachelor's degree or higher (14)
- I did not receive a formal education (15)
- Other (Specify): (16) _____
- I choose to skip this question (17)

Section C: Place of Birth (7 Questions)

Q11 Did you grow up in the United States?

If you were raised in more than one place, please list the place you spent the most time.

- Yes (4)
- No (5)
- I choose to skip this question (6)



Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Did you grow up in the United States? If you were raised in more than one place, please list the... = No

Q307 Which country did you grow up in?

If you were raised in more than one place, please list the place you spent the most time.

(Text response)



Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Did you grow up in the United States? If you were raised in more than one place, please list the... = Yes

Q309 What state did you grow up in?

If you were raised in more than one place, please list the place you spent the most time.

(Dropdown option for all 50 states and "I choose to skip this question")



Display This ONLY IF Question:

If What state did you grow up in? If you were raised in more than one place, please select the place... = New York

Q310 Did you grow up in New York City (NYC)?

If you were raised in more than one place, did you spend the most time in NYC?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)



Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Did you grow up in New York City (NYC)? If you were raised in more than one place, did you spend... = Yes

Q311 Which Borough did you grow up in?

If you were raised in more than one place, please list the place you spent the most time.

- The Bronx (1)
- Brooklyn (2)
- Manhattan (3)
- Queens (4)
- Staten Island (5)
- I choose to skip this question (9)

Q12 Were you born in the United States?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Skip To: End of Block If Were you born in the United States? = Yes

Skip To: Q13 If Were you born in the United States? = No

Q13 Are you a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident (with a green card)?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Section D: Housing (5 Questions)**Q312 Currently, how long have you been homeless or unstably housed?**

- 48 hours or less (4)
- Between 2 days and 1 week (5)
- Between 1 week and 1 month (6)
- Between 1 month and 6 months (7)
- Between 6 months and 1 year (8)
- More than 1 year (9)
- I do not consider myself homeless or unstably housed (10)
- I choose to skip this question (11)

Q14 Over the past month, where did you sleep most nights?

- In a house or apartment with my parent or guardian that they rent or own (1)
- At another family member's house or apartment (2)
- At the house or apartment of a foster parent (3)
- At a group home (4)
- At my own apartment (I pay rent) (5)
- Temporarily staying with friends or couch surfing (6)
- Temporarily staying in a house or an apartment (18)
- At my boyfriend/girlfriend/partner's home (7)
- At a shelter (8)
- In a transitional housing program (9)
- A treatment facility or center (hospital, detox, etc.) (10)
- Inside a car, abandoned building, squat, etc. (11)
- Outside in the park, on the street, in a tent, etc. (12)
- At a transit station (subway or bus station or the airport) (13)
- A jail, prison, or detention facility (14)
- Hotel/motel (15)
- If Other, please explain (16)
(Text response)
- I choose to skip this question (19)

Q15 Over the last month, which boroughs did you sleep in on most nights?*Check all that apply:*

- Bronx (1)
- Brooklyn (2)
- Manhattan (3)
- Queens (4)
- Staten Island (5)
- If Other, please explain (6)
- ⊗ I choose to skip this question (7)

Q16 Sometimes we experience things in life that make it challenging to find a safe place to live, stay in school, and find and keep a job.*Have you experienced any of the following:**Q16.1 Have you ever had to leave your home and live in a shelter, or with friends or other family members due to violence in the home? (1)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.2 Has violence in the home ever affected your ability to continue in school or find a job? (2)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.3 Have you ever been in an alcohol or substance abuse treatment program? (3)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.4 Has alcohol or substance use ever affected your ability to find a safe place to live? (4)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.5 Have you ever been involved in a gang? (5)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.6 Have you ever been arrested? (6)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.7 *Have you ever been incarcerated? (7)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16 Sometimes we experience things in life that make it challenging to find a safe place to live, stay in school, and find and keep a job.

Have you experienced any of the following:

Q16.1 *Have you ever had to leave your home and live in a shelter, or with friends or other family members due to violence in the home? (1)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.2 *Has violence in the home ever affected your ability to continue in school or find a job? (2)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.3 *Have you ever been in an alcohol or substance abuse treatment program? (3)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.4 *Has alcohol or substance use ever affected your ability to find a safe place to live? (4)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.5 *Have you ever been involved in a gang? (5)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.6 *Have you ever been arrested? (6)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q16.7 *Have you ever been incarcerated? (7)*

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17 Sometimes health or mental health conditions can affect our ability to find a safe place to live, stay in school, or find a job. *Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following:*

Q17.1 Depression (1)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.2 Anxiety (2)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.3 Bipolar Disorder (3)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.4 Schizophrenia (4)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.5 Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (5)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.6 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (6)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.7 Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) (7)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.8 Autism Spectrum Disorder (8)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.9 Learning Disability (9)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Q17.10 Physical Disability (10)

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to answer (3)

Section E: Leaving Home (4 Questions)**Q18 Have you ever run away from your parent or guardian's home?**

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Have you ever run away from your parent or guardian's home? = Yes

Q19 Why did you run away?

Please check all that apply:

- Physical abuse(1)
- Emotional abuse(2)
- Sexual abuse(3)
- They had too many rules (4)
- My parent chose their boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife over me(5)
- They didn't accept me for who I am (6)
- My parent was always drunk or on drugs (7)
- I didn't get along with my parents/ guardians (8)
- I didn't get along with the other kids I lived with (9)
- My parents could not afford to take care of me (10)
- If Other, please explain (12) _____
- ⊗ I choose to skip this question (13)

Q20 Have you ever been kicked out of your home by your parent or guardian?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This ONLY IF Question:

If Have you ever been kicked out of your home by your parent or guardian? = Yes

Q21 Why did your parent or guardian throw you out or kick you out?*Please check all that apply:*

- I didn't follow their rules (1)
- My parent chose their boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife over me(2)
- They didn't accept me for who I am (3)
- I didn't get along with the other children/young people I lived with (4)
- My parents/guardian could not afford to take care of me (5)
- I don't know(6)
- If Other, please explain (8) _____
- ☒ I choose to skip this question (7)

Section F:Work (9 Questions)

Q22 Have you ever done any kind of work/other activity for something in return from an employer, relative, friend, or stranger? This could mean that you received money, food, housing, drugs, or anything else. Remember: "Work/other activity" can be something like being a server at a restaurant or working at a store or something like selling drugs or trading sex. This could include doing it for someone even though you didn't want to. Thinking about all types of "work" above, have you ever done work for someone?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q23 Which of the following kinds of work have you ever done for someone, keeping in mind that by "work" we mean anything you did to get money or something of value—including food, clothes, a place to stay, protection, drugs, or gifts—for yourself (or your family).

Please check all that apply:

- Serving food in a restaurant or café (1)
- Another type of job in a restaurant or café (2)
- Working in a retail store (clothing store, grocery store, convenience store, at the mall, etc.) (3)
- Doing construction work or other home repairs (painting, plumbing, electricity, etc.) (4)
- Mowing lawns, shoveling sidewalks, or other yard work (5)
- Office work (answering phones, filing, etc.) (6)
- Selling items door-to-door (7)
- Selling items, dancing, or performing on the street or in the subways (8)
- Asking for change or donations on the street or in the subway (9)
- Trading sex for money, clothes, shelter, or other things (10)
- Participating in sexual videos or photos for money, clothes, shelter, or other things (11)
- Stripping (12)

- Babysitting (13)
- Cleaning homes (14)
- Delivering newspapers, restaurant food, groceries or other things to other people's homes (15)
- Doing nails or braiding hair (16)
- If Other, please explain (18) _____
- ☒ I choose to skip this question (17)

Q24 Employers, and people who help employers (such as managers, drivers, crew leaders, security, etc.), may use threats or lies to make you feel afraid to leave, complain, or seek help for your situation. Have you ever been unable to leave a place you worked or talk to people you wanted to talk to, even when you weren't working, because the person you worked for threatened or controlled you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q25 Did someone you work for ever refuse to pay what they promised and keep all or most of the money you made?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q26 Were you ever physically beaten, slapped, hit, kicked, punched, burned or harmed in any way by someone you work for?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q27 Did you ever feel emotionally abused by someone you worked for?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q28 Did someone you work for ever ask, pressure, or force you to do something sexually that you did not feel comfortable doing?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q29 Did someone you work for ever force you to engage in sexual acts with family, friends, clients, or business associates for money or favors?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Q30 Did you ever trade sexual acts for food, clothing, money, shelter, favors, or other necessities for survival before you reached the age of 18?

- o Yes (1)
- o No (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Section G: Service Needs and Openness to Services (66 Questions)

Q322 Mental Health Services

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Mental Health Services = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q224 Do you have a need for Mental Health Services?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Mental Health Services = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q226 What type of Mental Health Services are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I would like some information about mental health and/or stress management (197)
- I would like to be able to talk to a counselor once a week (198)
- I would like to talk to a therapist every week and/or receive medication to help manage my feelings (199)
- I would like to be referred to an in-patient facility (200)
- I would like to receive group counseling (201)
- If Other, please explain (202)
- Not Sure (203)
- I choose to skip this question (204)

Q227 Based on the Mental Health Services you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I would like some information about mental health and/or stress management (1)
- _____ I would like to be able to talk to a counselor once a week (2)
- _____ I would like to talk to a therapist every week and/or receive medication to help manage my feelings (3)
- _____ I would like to be referred to an in-patient facility (4)
- _____ I would like to receive group counseling (5)
- _____ If Other, please explain (6)
- _____ Not Sure (7)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (8)

Q228 How do you prefer to receive Mental Health Services?

Please select the option that appeals most to you.

- o Group session (1)
- o One-on-one time with a counselor (2)
- o Both group sessions and one-on-one (3)
- o One-on-one time with psychiatrist (4)
- o Telehealth (7)
- o Depends on the circumstances and how I feel that day (5)
- o I choose to skip the question (6)

Q293 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Mental Health Services ?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question).

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- *I would like some information about mental health and/or stress management (xx197)*
- *I would like to be able to talk to a counselor once a week (xx198)*
- *I would like to talk to a therapist every week and/or receive medication to help manage my feelings (xx199)*
- *I would like to be referred to an in-patient facility (xx200)*
- *I would like to receive group counseling (xx201)*
- *If Other, please explain (xx202)*
- *Not Sure (xx203)*
- *I choose to skip this question (xx204)*

Q323 Medical and Dental Care (such as access to HIV Testing, Pregnancy Testing, etc.)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

↳ **Display This Question:**
If Medical and Dental Care = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q230 Do you have a need for Medical and Dental Care?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

↳ **Display This Question:**
If Medical and Dental Care = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q231 What type of Medical and Dental Care are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I am feeling ok, but I need a medical and/or a dental check up (31)
- I am concerned I might be pregnant, have HIV or have an STI and need testing (32)
- I have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and I am scared I have a major health issue (33)
- I am injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with me to the clinic/hospital (34)
- I need surgery and need assistance finding a doctor and paying for the surgery (35)
- If Other, please explain (36) _____
- Not sure (37)
- I choose to skip this question (38)

Q232 Based on the Medical and Dental Care you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I am feeling ok, but I need a medical and/or a dental check up (1)
- _____ I am concerned I might be pregnant, have HIV or have an STI and need testing (2)
- _____ I have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and I am scared I have a major health issue (3)
- _____ I am injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with me to the clinic/hospital (4)
- _____ I need surgery and need assistance finding a doctor and paying for the surgery (5)
- _____ If Other, please explain (6)
- _____ Not sure (7)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (8)

Q295 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Medical and Dental Care services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- *I am feeling ok, but I need a medical and/or a dental check up (xx31)*
- *I am concerned I might be pregnant, have HIV or have an STI and need testing (xx32)*
- *I have been in a lot of pain and/or feeling really sick and I am scared I have a major health issue (xx33)*
- *I am injured/in a lot of pain and would like someone to go with me to the clinic/hospital (xx34)*
- *I need surgery and need assistance finding a doctor and paying for the surgery (xx35)*
- *If Other, please explain (xx36)*
- *Not sure (xx37)*
- *I choose to skip this question (xx38)*

Q324 Substance Abuse and Alcohol Counseling or Treatment

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Substance Abuse and Alcohol Counseling or Treatment = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q235 Do you have a need for Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Substance Abuse and Alcohol Counseling or Treatment = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q236 What type of Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I would like information about drugs and alcohol abuse (354)*
- I would like information about how to use drugs and alcohol safely until I am ready to stop (360)*
- I would like to speak to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor about my drug/alcohol use (355)*
- I would like to be admitted to a treatment program (356)*
- If Other, please explain (357) _____*
- Not sure (358)*
- I choose to skip this question (359)*

Q238 Based on the Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I would like information about drugs and alcohol abuse (1)
- _____ I would like information about how to use drugs and alcohol safely until I am ready to stop (2)
- _____ I would like to speak to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor about my drug/alcohol use (3)
- _____ I would like to be admitted to a treatment program (4)
- _____ If Other, please explain (5)
- _____ Not sure (6)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (7)

Q296 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I would like information about drugs and alcohol abuse (xx354)
- I would like information about how to use drugs and alcohol safely until I am ready to stop (xx360)
- I would like to speak to a drug/alcohol abuse counselor about my drug/alcohol use (xx355)
- I would like to be admitted to a treatment program (xx356)
- If Other, please explain (xx357)
- Not sure (xx358)
- I choose to skip this question (xx359)

Q325 Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services (such as Emergency Shelter, Emergency Mental health Assessment)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

→ **Display This Question:**
If Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q235 Do you have a need for Substance Abuse and Alcohol Treatment?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

→ **Display This Question:**
If Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q242 What type of Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I am feeling really stressed and need to talk to someone this week (119)
- I don't know where I'm staying this week and need help getting into shelter (120)
- I am in an unsafe situation and need safety planning and leaving the situation (121)
- I am feeling suicidal and/or want to harm myself and need immediate assistance (122)
- If Other, please explain (123) _____
- Not sure (124)
- I choose to skip this question (125)

Q243 Based on the Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I am feeling really stressed and need to talk to someone this week (1)
- _____ I don't know where I'm staying this week and need help getting into shelter (2)
- _____ I am in an unsafe situation and need safety planning and leaving the situation (3)
- _____ I am feeling suicidal and/or want to harm myself and need immediate assistance (4)
- _____ If Other, please explain (5)
- _____ Not sure (6)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (7)

Q297 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Crisis intervention and 24-Hour Response Services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I am feeling really stressed and need to talk to someone this week (xx119)
- I don't know where I'm staying this week and need help getting into shelter (xx120)
- I am in an unsafe situation and need safety planning and leaving the situation (xx121)
- I am feeling suicidal and/or want to harm myself and need immediate assistance (xx122)
- If Other, please explain (xx123)
- Not sure (xx124)
- I choose to skip this question (xx125)

Q326 Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services (transitional/long term placement or reunification with family)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

↳ **Display This Question:**
If Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q246 Do you have a need for Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

↳ **Display This Question:**
If Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q247 What type of Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need help looking for an apartment or applying for housing assistance (1)
- I need housing I can stay in for at least a year so I can prepare to move into an apartment (2)
- I have run out of shelter options and need a long-term place to stay in the next couple of months (3)
- If Other, please explain (4) _____
- Not sure (5)
- I choose to skip this question (6)

Q248 Based on the Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need help looking for an apartment or applying for housing assistance (1)
- _____ I need housing I can stay in for at least a year so I can prepare to move into an apartment (2)
- _____ I have run out of shelter options and need a long-term place to stay in the next couple of months (3)
- _____ If Other, please explain (4)
- _____ Not sure (5)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (6)

Q298 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Long Term Supportive Housing and Shelter Services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need help looking for an apartment or applying for housing assistance (xx1)
- I need housing I can stay in for at least a year so I can prepare to move into an apartment (xx2)
- I have run out of shelter options and need a long-term place to stay in the next couple of months (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Q327 Legal Assistance (immigration, obtaining identification, family court)

- Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Legal Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q251 Do you have a need for Legal Assistance?

- Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Legal Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q252 What type of Legal Assistance are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need one or two sessions of legal counseling to discuss my rights in the workplace, my rights in housing court, obtaining a name change, or help to obtain legal ID (82)
- I need help understanding what is on my criminal record or clearing up open warrants (89)
- I need help to get an order of protection or help with assistance with getting back my public benefits (83)
- I need help going to court to defend me in court, seek legal immigration status, or prosecute someone (84)
- I need help with a family court case (85)
- If Other, please explain (86) _____
- Not sure (87)
- I choose to skip this question (88)

Q253 Based on the Legal Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need one or two sessions of legal counseling to discuss my rights in the workplace, my rights in housing court, obtaining a name change, or help to obtain legal ID (1)
- _____ I need help understanding what is on my criminal record or clearing up open warrants (2)
- _____ I need help to get an order of protection or help with assistance with getting back my public benefits (3)
- _____ I need help going to court to defend me in court, seek legal immigration status, or prosecute someone (4)
- _____ I need help with a family court case (5)
- _____ If Other, please explain (6)
- _____ Not sure (7)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (8)

Q299 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Legal Assistance services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need one or two sessions of legal counseling to discuss my rights in the workplace, my rights in housing court, obtaining a name change, or help to obtain legal ID (xx82)
- I need help understanding what is on my criminal record or clearing up open warrants (xx89)
- I need help to get an order of protection or help with assistance with getting back my public benefits (xx83)
- I need help going to court to defend me in court, seek legal immigration status, or prosecute someone (xx84)
- I need help with a family court case (xx85)
- If Other, please explain (xx86)
- Not sure (xx87)
- I choose to skip this question (xx88)

Q328 Service Coordination and Advocacy (assistance with referrals to other services such as DHS, housing advocacy)

o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)

o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Service Coordination and Advocacy = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q256 Do you have a need for Service Coordination and Advocacy?

o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)

o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)

o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Service Coordination and Advocacy = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q257 What type of Service Coordination and Advocacy are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

I need referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs (1)

I need referrals and advocacy for public assistance (2)

I need referrals and advocacy for shelter and housing (3)

If Other, please explain (4) _____

Not sure (5)

I choose to skip this question (6)

Q258 Based on the Service Coordination and Advocacy you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs (1)
 _____ I need referrals and advocacy for public assistance (2)
 _____ I need referrals and advocacy for shelter and housing (3)
 _____ If Other, please explain (4)
 _____ Not sure (5)
 _____ I choose to skip this question (6)

Q300 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Service Coordination and Advocacy services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need referrals and advocacy for training and educational programs (xx1)
- I need referrals and advocacy for public assistance (xx2)
- I need referrals and advocacy for shelter and housing (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Q329 Practical Assistance (food, personal hygiene, clothing, basic necessities, transportation)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
 o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Practical Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q261 Do you have a need for Practical Assistance?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
 o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
 o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Practical Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q262 What type of Practical Assistance are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a month (1)
 I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a week (2)
 I need help with transportation, food, clothing and hygiene items several times a week (3)
 If Other, please explain (4) _____
 Not sure (5)
 I choose to skip this question (6)

Q263 Based on the Practical Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a month (1)
- _____ I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a week (2)
- _____ I need help with transportation, food, clothing and hygiene items several times a week (3)
- _____ If Other, please explain (4)
- _____ Not sure (5)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (6)

Q301 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Practical Assistance services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question).

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a month (xx1)
- I need help with transportation, food, clothing or personal items once or twice a week (xx2)
- I need help with transportation, food, clothing and hygiene items several times a week (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Q330 Financial Assistance (utilities, assistance with rent, cash)

- Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Financial Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q266 Do you have a need for Financial Assistance (e.g., utilities, assistance with rent, cash)?

- Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Financial Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q267 What type of Financial Assistance (e.g., utilities, assistance with rent, cash) are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- Financial assistance 0 -2 times per month (1)
- Financial assistance 1-2 times per week (2)
- Financial assistance 3-5 times per week (3)
- If Other, please explain (4) _____
- Not sure (5)
- I choose to skip this question (6)

Q268 Based on the Financial Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ If you selected three or more, choose your top 3 and rank them between 1,2 and 3.
 _____ Financial assistance 0 -2 times per month (1)
 _____ Financial assistance 1-2 times per week (2)
 _____ Financial assistance 3-5 times per week (3)
 _____ If Other, please explain (4)
 _____ Not sure (5)
 _____ I choose to skip this question (6)

Q302 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Financial Assistance services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- Financial assistance 0 -2 times per month (xx1)
- Financial assistance 1-2 times per week (xx2)
- Financial assistance 3-5 times per week (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Q331 Life Skills (Financial Literacy, Taking Public Transportation, Time Management)

- Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
 No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Life Skills = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q271 Do you have a need for Life Skills (Financial Literacy, Taking Public Transportation, Time Management)?

- Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
 No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
 I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Life Skills = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q272 What type of Life Skills are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need help learning how to manage my responsibilities and appointments (401)
- I need help learning how to cook meals and do laundry (402)
- I need help to work on my interpersonal skills (403)
- I need help learning different technology (404)
- I need help learning healthy ways to stay safe (405)
- I need help learning how to develop healthy relationships (406)
- I need help opening a bank account, cashing checks, and learning how to manage a budget (407)
- If Other, please explain (408) _____
- Not sure (409)
- I choose to skip this question (410)

Q273 Based on the Life Skills you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ If you selected three or more, choose your top 3 and rank them between 1,2 and 3.
- _____ I need help learning how to manage my responsibilities and appointments (1)
- _____ I need help learning how to cook meals and do laundry (2)
- _____ I need help to work on my interpersonal skills (3)
- _____ I need help learning different technology (4)
- _____ I need help learning healthy ways to stay safe (5)
- _____ I need help learning how to develop healthy relationships (6)
- _____ I need help opening a bank account, cashing checks, and learning how to manage a budget (7)
- _____ If Other, please explain (8)
- _____ Not sure (9)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (10)

Q303 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Life Skills services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need help learning how to manage my responsibilities and appointments (xx401)
- I need help learning how to cook meals and do laundry (xx402)
- I need help to work on my interpersonal skills (xx403)
- I need help learning different technology (xx404)
- I need help learning healthy ways to stay safe (xx405)
- I need help learning how to develop healthy relationships (xx406)
- I need help opening a bank account, cashing checks, and learning how to manage a budget (xx407)
- If Other, please explain (xx408)
- Not sure (xx409)
- I choose to skip this question (xx410)

Q332 Employment Assistance (job placement, resume help, career counseling)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Employment Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q276 Do you have a need for Employment Assistance?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Employment Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q277 What type of Employment Assistance are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need to learn how to communicate professionally with my supervisor and coworkers (1)
- I need help with job training and placement (2)
- I need help with resume and job searching strategies (3)
- If Other, please explain (4) _____
- Not sure (5)
- I choose to skip this question (6)

Q278 Based on the Employment Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need to learn how to communicate professionally with my supervisor and coworkers (1)
- _____ I need help with job training and placement (2)
- _____ I need help with resume and job searching strategies (3)
- _____ If Other, please explain (4)
- _____ Not sure (5)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (6)

Q304 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Employment Assistance services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need to learn how to communicate professionally with my supervisor and coworkers (xx1)
- I need help with job training and placement (xx2)
- I need help with resume and job searching strategies (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Q333 Educational Assistance (GED, vocational training, college applications)

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Educational Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q281 Do you have a need for Educational Assistance?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Educational Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q282 What type of Educational Assistance are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I need help signing up for my GED/vocational training, or help filling out my college applications (118)
- I need help filling out financial assistance forms for college/vocational school (119)
- I need some tutoring for the GED/vocational training/college entrance exams (120)
- I need help paying for my GED/vocational training/college (121)
- If Other, please explain (122) _____
- Not sure (123)
- I choose to skip this question (124)

Q283 Based on the Educational Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I need help signing up for my GED/vocational training, or help filling out my college applications (1)
- _____ I need help filling out financial assistance forms for college/vocational school (2)
- _____ I need some tutoring for the GED/vocational training/college entrance exams (3)
- _____ I need help paying for my GED/vocational training/college (4)
- _____ If Other, please explain (5)
- _____ Not sure (6)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (7)

Q306 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Educational Assistance services?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I need help signing up for my GED/vocational training, or help filling out my college applications (xx118)
- I need help filling out financial assistance forms for college/vocational school (xx119)
- I need some tutoring for the GED/vocational training/college entrance exams (xx120)
- I need help paying for my GED/vocational training/college (xx121)
- If Other, please explain (xx122)
- Not sure (xx123)
- I choose to skip this question (xx124)

Q334 Childcare or Parenting Assistance

- o Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future (1)
- o No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future (2)

Display This Question:

If Childcare or Parenting Assistance = No, I'm not interested in this service now nor would I be interested in the future

Q286 Do you have a need for Childcare or Parenting Assistance?

- o Yes, I have a need but I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (1)
- o No, I do not have a need, and I do not want it/ I am not ready/ I am not interested (2)
- o I choose to skip this question (3)

Display This Question:

If Childcare or Parenting Assistance = Yes, I'm interested in this service now or would be in the future

Q287 What type of Childcare or Parenting Assistance are you interested in now or in the future?

Select all that apply:

- I want parenting classes or coaching (1)
- I need to complete parenting classes or coaching as part of a family court matter (7)
- I need occasional child care (2)
- I need full time childcare (3)
- If Other, please explain (4) _____
- Not sure (5)
- I choose to skip this question (6)

Q288 Based on the Childcare or Parenting Assistance you selected, please rank your top 3 in order of importance to you:

1= Most Important, 2= Next Important, 3= Least Important

- _____ I want parenting classes or coaching (1)
- _____ I need to complete parenting classes or coaching as part of a family court matter (2)
- _____ I need occasional child care (3)
- _____ I need full time childcare (4)
- _____ If Other, please explain (5)
- _____ Not sure (6)
- _____ I choose to skip this question (7)

Q305 Approximately when would you need or be open to these Childcare or Parenting Assistance?

Possible Response Options (for each sub question)

Immediately, 1-3 months, 3-6 months, 6-12 months, More than 1 year, Not Sure

- I want parenting classes or coaching (xx1)
- I need to complete parenting classes or coaching as part of a family court matter (xx7)
- I need occasional child care (xx2)
- I need full time childcare (xx3)
- If Other, please explain (xx4)
- Not sure (xx5)
- I choose to skip this question (xx6)

Section J: Additional Questions on Desirable Shelter Features (9 Questions)

Q197 Which boroughs are you currently receiving services in?

Please check all that apply:

- The Bronx (1)
- Brooklyn (2)
- Manhattan (3)
- Queens (4)
- Staten Island (5)
- If Other, please explain (6) _____
- I choose to skip this question (7)

Q335 Which of the boroughs would you prefer to receive services in?

Please check all that apply:

- The Bronx (1)
- Brooklyn (2)
- Manhattan (3)
- Queens (4)
- Staten Island (5)
- If Other, please explain (6) _____
- I choose to skip this question (7)

Q198 If you were seeking shelter, what size shelter would you feel most comfortable and safe staying in?

- Large (20 or more beds) (1)
- Medium (11-19 beds) (2)
- Small (10 or less beds) (3)
- I don't have a preference (4)
- I choose to skip this question (5)

Q199 If you were seeking shelter, what kind of community/demographic in a shelter would appeal to you?

Please check all that apply:

- Female only (1)
- Male only (2)
- LGBTQ+ (3)
- Transgender only (4)
- Mixed gender and sexual orientations (5)
- Being able to stay in a shelter with your partner (6)
- Being able to stay in a shelter with your pet (7)
- Being able to stay in a shelter with your children (8)
- I don't have a preference (9)
- If Other, please explain (10) _____
- I choose to skip this question (11)

Q200 If you were seeking shelter, what type of shelter would you want?

- Emergency, just something for the next 24-48 hours (1)
- Drop in (2)
- Transitional (3)
- Short-term (up to 30 days) (4)
- Long-term (up to 18 months) (5)
- Assistance with finding my own housing (6)
- Not interested (7)
- I choose to skip this question (8)

Q201 If you were/are staying in a shelter, which of the following shelter characteristics would make you feel safer and/or comfortable?*Please check all that apply:*

- 24 hour security/staff (1)
- Curfew (2)
- Nightly bed checks (3)
- People staying in the shelter are just like me (4)
- Daily check-in with shelter staff (5)
- No outside visitors (6)
- Supervised visits with pre-screened friends (7)
- Onsite case manager and therapist (8)
- Regular activities within the shelter (9)
- If Other, please explain (10) _____
- I choose to skip this question (11)

Q202 If you were/are staying in a shelter, which of the following characteristics would be the most challenging for you to follow?*Please select your top 3:*

- Curfew (1)
- Nightly bed checks (2)
- Daily check-in with shelter staff (3)
- Required shelter meetings (4)
- No outside visitors (5)
- Required appointments with case manager (6)
- Required group counseling (7)
- Required individual counseling (8)
- Giving a portion of income to shelter for savings (9)
- Required to leave the shelter during the day (10)
- Required group activities (11)
- Required religious service (12)
- I choose to skip this question (13)

Q203 If you were seeking shelter, would you want shelter or services for someone other than yourself?

Please check all that apply:

- Just myself (1)
- My child (2)
- Partner (3)
- Friend (4)
- Relative (sibling, parent, guardian) (5)
- Pet/ Service animal/ Emotional Support animal (6)
- I choose to skip this question (7)

Q204 If you were/are staying in a shelter, would you be interested in any of the following wellness/hobby activities?

Please check all that apply:

- Open mic night (1)
- Museum visits (2)
- Video games (3)
- Art classes (pottery, painting, drawing) (4)
- Sports/Exercise classes (basketball, yoga, Zumba, running) (5)
- If Other, please explain (6) _____
- I choose to skip this question (7)

