

Youth Experiences Survey

2021

Exploring the Human Trafficking Experiences of Homeless
Young Adults in Arizona, Year Eight.

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Acknowledgements

The 2021 YES Study was made possible by the following four participating agencies:



ourfamily services



NATIVE AMERICAN CONNECTIONS



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Today's Youth. Tomorrow's Future.

Method

GENERAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the life experiences of homeless young adults in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona related to place of origin, education, use of drugs and alcohol, mental and physical diagnoses, family connectedness, and reasons for homelessness?
2. What Adverse Childhood Experiences have homeless young adults in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona faced?
3. What risk factors and protective factors are present for homeless young adults in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona?

WITHIN THE SEX TRAFFICKED HOMELESS YOUNG ADULTS

1. What were the most common reasons the sex trafficking victims identified as how they were sex trafficked?
2. What is a profile of a sex trafficked homeless young adult from Phoenix/Tucson, Arizona?
3. How prevalent was the use of technology in their sex trafficking experience?
4. What are the differences between sex trafficked homeless young adults and non-sex trafficked homeless young adults?

WITHIN THE LABOR EXPLOITED HOMELESS YOUNG ADULTS

1. What were the most common reasons the labor exploited victims identified as how they were exploited for labor?
2. What is a profile of a labor exploited homeless young adult from Phoenix/Tucson, Arizona?
3. What sectors did the labor exploited homeless young adults experience labor exploitation?
4. What are the differences between labor exploited homeless young adults and non-labor exploited homeless young adults?

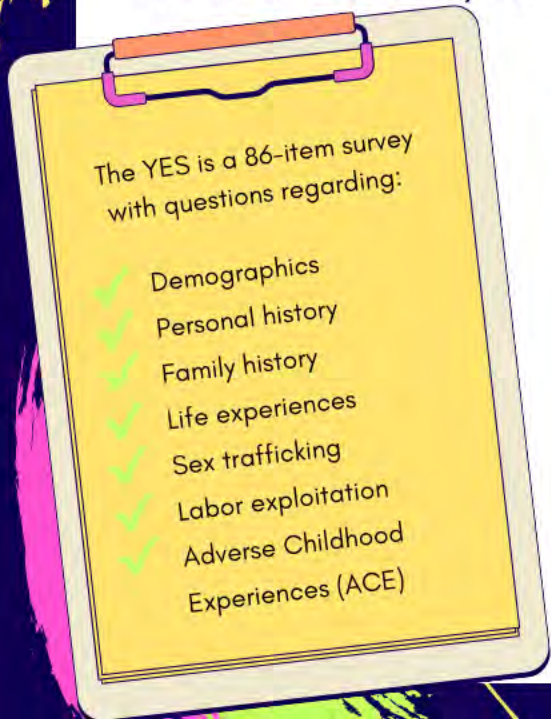
Method

INSTRUMENT

Due to the unique challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 YES instrument was made available in both a paper-and-pencil format as well as an online survey format.

Participants of the YES study were receiving services from:

- **Our Family Services**
(n = 64, 71.9%),
- **Native American Connections**
(n = 22, 24.7%)
- **UMOM**
(n = 2, 2.2%)
- **one.n.ten**
(n = 1, 1.1%)



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

N = 89

homeless young adults participated in the 2021 YES Study.



77.5%

Paper and Pencil
Surveys



22.5%

Online Surveys

All participants received a \$5 gift card incentive.

Participants ($N = 89$)

SETTING

Participants responded to the survey from:



Housing Programs
($n = 43, 48.3\%$)



Street Outreach
($n = 22, 24.7\%$)



Drop-in Centers
($n = 18, 20.2\%$)

AGE

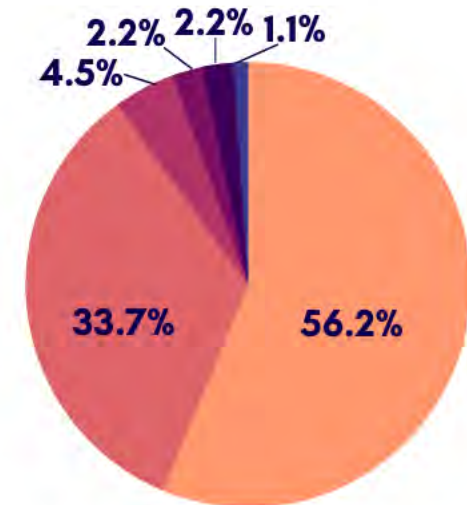
The age of participants ranged from



($M = 21.2, SD = 2.19$)

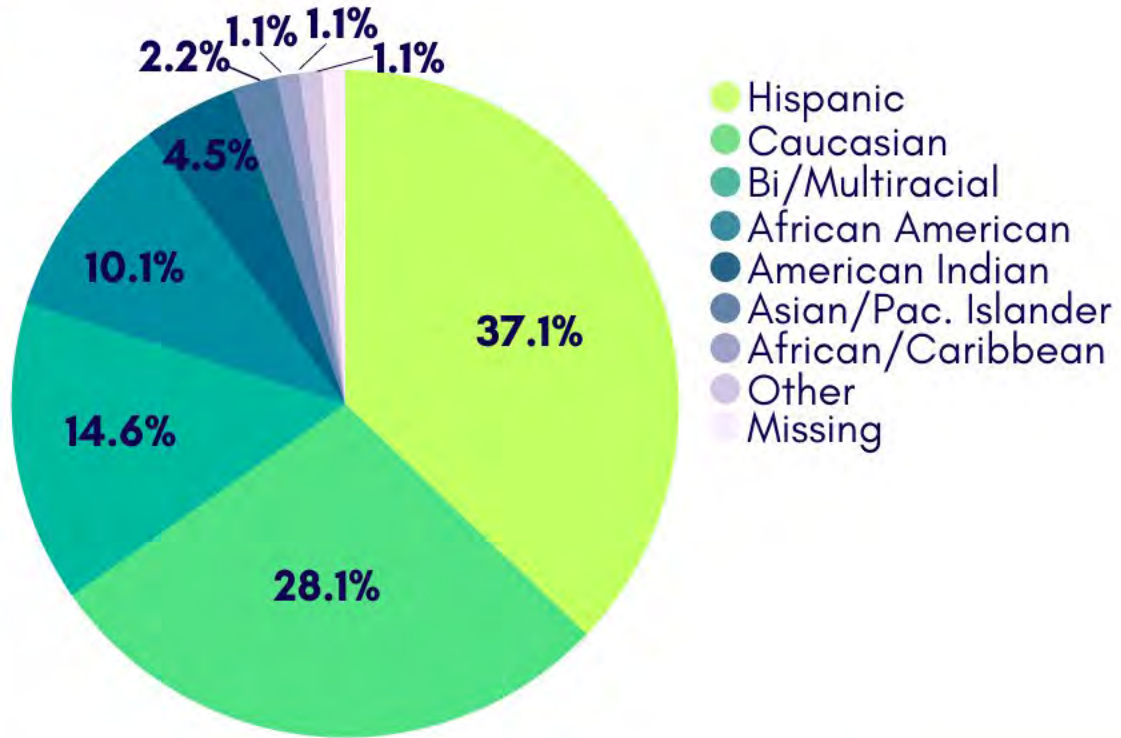
GENDER

- Female
- Male
- Transgender
- Non-conforming
- Genderqueer
- Two-spirit

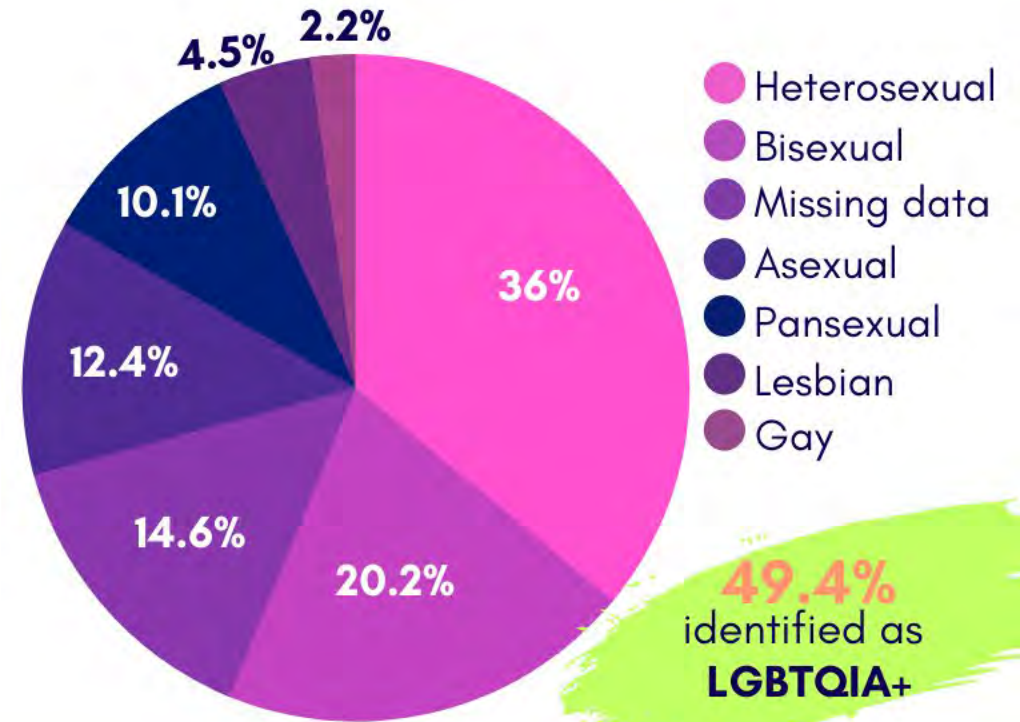


Participants (N = 89)

ETHNICITY



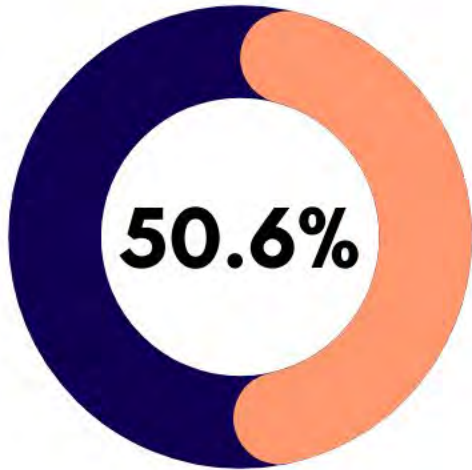
SEXUAL ORIENTATION



49.4%
identified as
LGBTQIA+

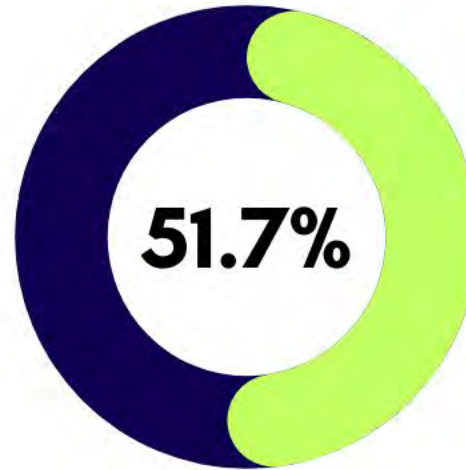
Findings (N = 89)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



**Graduated
High School**

Half (n = 45, 50.6%) of participants reported successfully graduating from High School.



**Dropped Out of
School**

Half (n = 46, 51.7%) of participants reported dropping out of school at some point during their education career.

Findings (N = 89)

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



(n = 17, 19.1%)

I moved around a lot



(n = 15, 16.9%)

I was homeless



(n = 7, 7.9%)

I had to work to support myself



(n = 4, 4.5%)

I was using substances



(n = 3, 3.4%)

I was expelled



(n = 12, 13.5%)

Academic difficulty



(n = 12, 13.5%)

I was pregnant/
had a baby



(n = 3, 3.4%)

Bullying

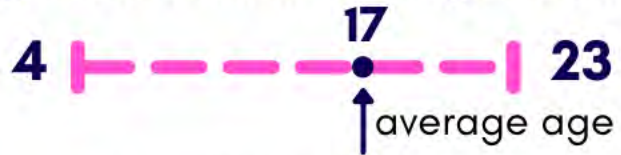
Dropping Out

Participants' reasons for dropping out of school included:

Findings (N = 89)

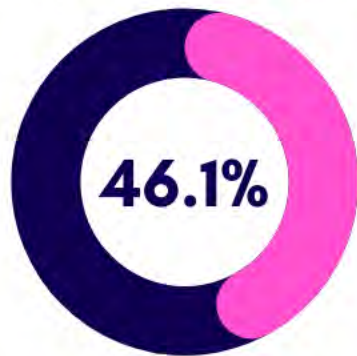
HOMELESSNESS + HOUSING

Age of 1st homeless ranged from:



(M = 17, SD = 3.66)

41 participants first experienced



homelessness **under the age of 18.**

Current Housing Arrangements

Participants reported currently living:



(n = 26, 29.2%)
In my own place
(transitional)



(n = 23, 25.8%)
In a shelter



(n = 14, 15.7%)
On the street



(n = 12, 13.5%)
Couch-surfing



(n = 5, 5.6%)
In my own place
(paid by self)



(n = 5, 5.6%)
Other



(n = 3, 3.4%)
In a hotel

Findings (N = 89)

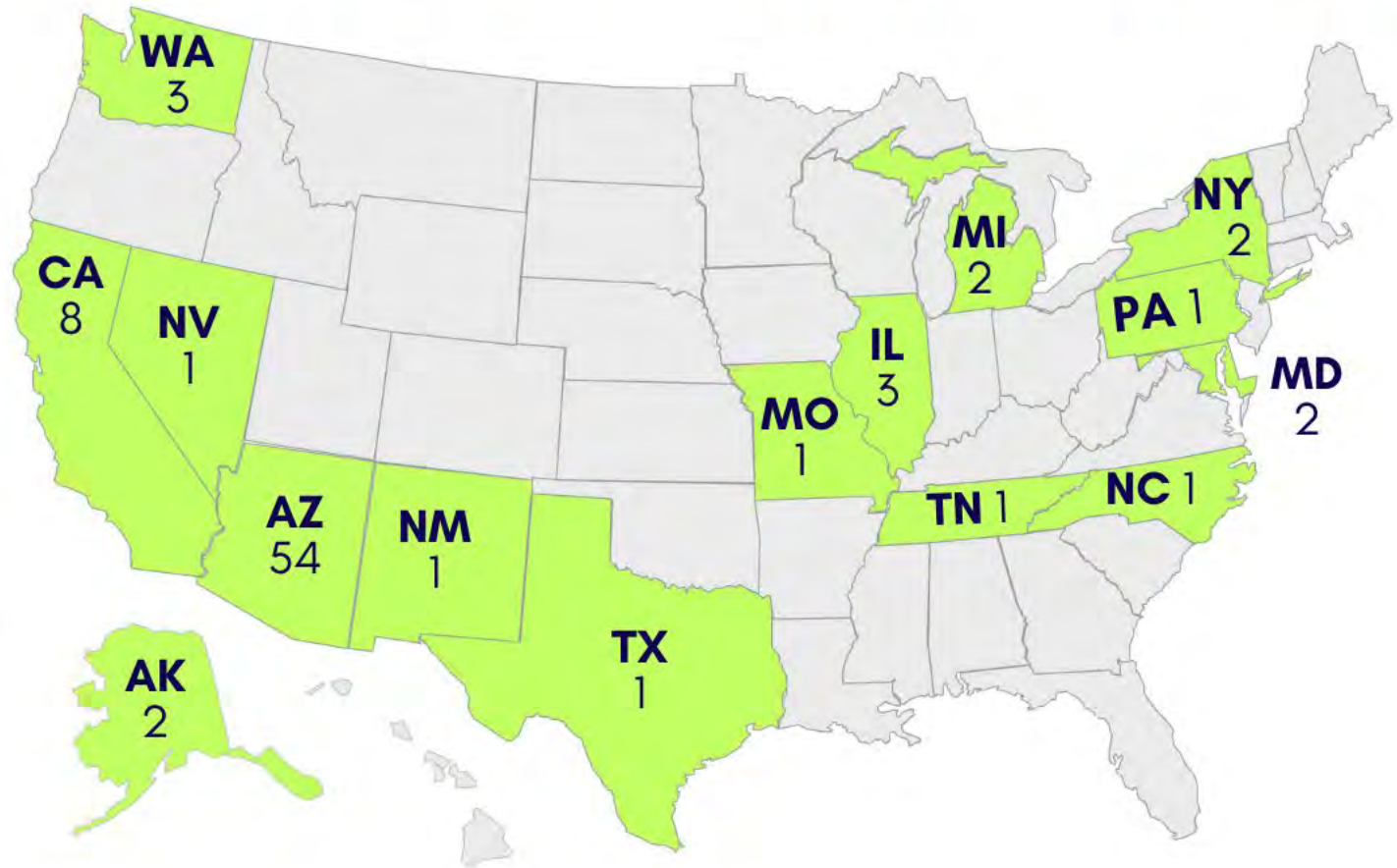
Place of Origin

Participants originated from around the United States, as well as from:

- Mexico (n = 3, 3.4%)
- Iraq (n = 1, 1.1%)
- Russia (n = 1, 1.1%)

Only six (6.7%) participants lived in AZ less than 1 year.

Over half (n = 48, 53.9%) reported being raised in AZ.



Findings (N = 89)

SUBSTANCE USE



Fifty-three (59.6%) participants reported drug use.

Age of 1st drug use ranged from:



($M = 15.4$, $SD = 2.82$)

Participants reported using the following:

Substance used, by type	n	%
Marijuana/Weed	32	36%
Methamphetamines	6	6.7%
Pills	5	5.6%
Percocet/Percodan	3	3.4%
Opiates/Oxy	3	3.4%
All Drugs	2	2.2%
Ecstasy	1	1.1%
Cocaine/Crack	1	1.1%
Acid	1	1.1%

About
1 in 3
($n = 27$, 30.3%)
participants
vape.

Findings (N = 89)

ADDICTION



Drugs

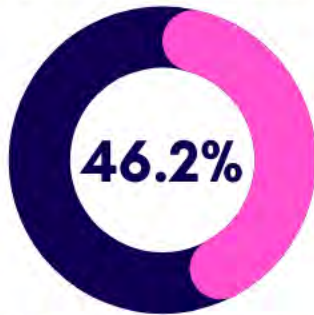
Thirteen participants

Of the 13 that identified as having an addiction,



14.6%

identified as having an **addiction to drugs.**



46.2%

(n = 6) began experiencing addiction **after** becoming homeless.



Alcohol

Eleven participants

Of the 11 that identified as having an addiction,



12.4%

identified as having an **addiction to alcohol.**



63.6%

(n = 7) began experiencing addiction **after** becoming homeless.

Findings (N = 89)

SELF-HARM

Almost half (n = 43)



of participants reported engaging in some form of self-harming behavior.

Self-Harm Behavior, by type	n	%
Cutting	28	31.5%
Not eating for long periods of time	27	30.3%
Risk taking behavior	21	23.6%
Drinking alcohol excessively	19	21.3%
Binging/Vomiting	17	19.1%
Drug use	16	18%
Sex with strangers	14	15.7%
Body modification	9	10.1%
Scarification	6	6.7%
Overdosing on prescription meds	1	1.1%

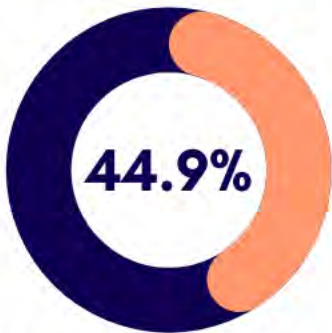
Findings (N = 89)

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES



Over 1 in every 3
(n = 34, 38.2%)
participant reported
attempting suicide.

Less than half (n = 40)



reported receiving
treatment for their
mental health disorder.



61.8%
(n = 55) reported having a
**current mental health
diagnosis.**

52.8%
(n = 47) reported **more
than one** mental health
diagnosis.

The most reported mental health diagnoses included:

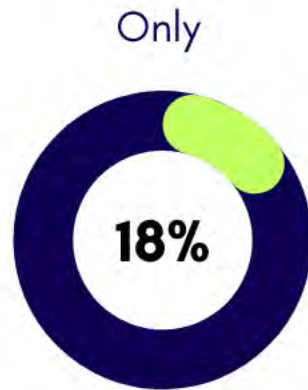
Mental Health Diagnosis, by type	n	%
Depression	46	51.7%
Anxiety	45	50.6%
ADD/ADHD	21	23.6%
Bipolar Disorder	20	22.5%
PTSD	16	18%
Borderline Personality Disorder	10	11.2%

Findings (N = 89)

PHYSICAL HEALTH CHALLENGES



(n = 46) participants reported having a **current medical issue**.



(n = 16) reported receiving treatment.

The most common medical issues reported included:



(n = 19, 21.3%)
Asthma



(n = 13, 14.6%)
Poor vision



(n = 9, 10.1%)
Dental problems



(n = 6, 6.7%)
Skin problems



Findings (N = 89)

PREGNANCY + CHILDREN



(7.9%) participants were pregnant at the time of the 2021 YES Survey.

Children reportedly lived:

- In the participant's care (n = 19, 21.3%)
- With family (n = 10, 11.2%)
- In DCS custody (n = 4, 4.5%)
- Other (n = 4, 4.5%)



30.3%

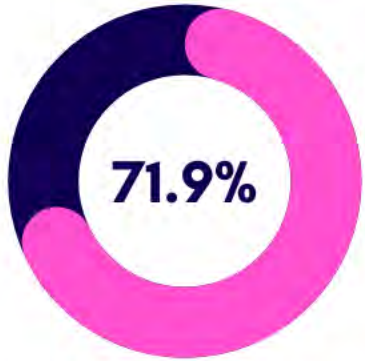
(n = 27) participants reported having children.

Child amount ranged between one to two children (M = 1.5, SD = 0.51)



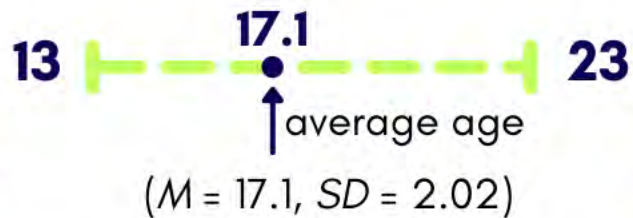
Findings ($N = 89$)

FAMILY INSTABILITY



($n = 64$) were
kicked out
of the home.

Age of first time kicked out
ranging between:



Over **one in every three**
participants ($n = 35$, 39.3%)
reported being **kicked out**
before the age of 18.

Findings (N = 89)

VIOLENT RELATIONSHIPS



(n = 29) of participants witnessed domestic violence in the home.

Witnessing Domestic Violence in Childhood



About 1 in every 3 participants reported witnessing their father hit their mother (n = 28, 31.5%).



1 in 5 participants reported witnessing their mother hit their father (n = 18, 20.2%).

Experiencing Domestic Violence in Adulthood

50.6%

(n = 45) reported experiencing abuse by their intimate partner.

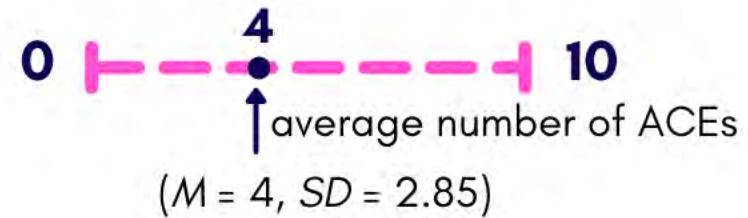
28.1%

(n = 25) reported also being abusive to their intimate partner.

Findings (N = 89)

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES

Participants reported experiencing between 0 to 10 ACEs.

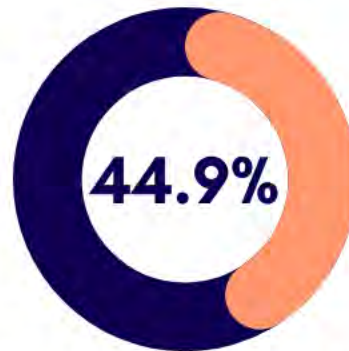


68 participants reported experiencing



more than one ACE

40 participants reported experiencing



between 0-3 ACEs

47 participants reported experiencing



4 or more ACEs

Findings (N = 89)

ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES



60.7%

Emotional
Abuse



59.6%

Parents Separated
/Divorced



51.7%

Emotional
Neglect



44.9%

Substance Abuse
in the Household



38.2%

Physical
Abuse



31.5%

Mental Illness in
the Household



30.3%

Witness Domestic
Violence



27%

Incarcerated
Household Member



24.7%

Physical
Neglect



21.3%

Sexual
Abuse

Findings (N = 89)

NEGATIVE LIFE EXPERIENCES

Participants reported experiencing additional life challenges, including:

Running away from home
(n = 41, 46.1%)

Academic difficulty
(n = 40, 44.9%)

Bullied by school peers
(n = 38, 42.7%)

Dating violence
(n = 28, 31.5%)

Negative contact with law enforcement
(n = 24, 27%)

Harassment by peers
(n = 21, 23.6%)

Special education classes
(n = 21, 23.6%)

Foster case/group home
(n = 19, 21.3%)

Juvenile Justice System
(n = 18, 20.2%)

Residential treatment
(n = 12, 13.5%)

Worked in the adult entertainment industry
(n = 5, 5.6%)

Gang affiliation
(n = 3, 3.4%)

Findings (N = 89)

POSITIVE LIFE EXPERIENCES

Participants also reported positive life experiences that can serve as protective factors against homelessness or long-term negative effects of trauma.

Said no when drugs or alcohol were offered.
(n = 45, 50.6%)

Said no when pressured for sex
(n = 33, 37.1%)

Enrolled in school or technical program
(n = 32, 36%)

Practiced safe sex
(n = 32, 36%)

Supportive, loving family/group of friends
(n = 31, 34.8%)

Been part of a youth club or organization
(n = 30, 33.7%)

Healthy, safe and permanent place to live
(n = 29, 32.6%)

Feel secure standing up for/protecting self
(n = 29, 32.6%)

Volunteered in the community
(n = 23, 25.8%)

Steady employment
(n = 21, 23.6%)

Aware of community resources
(n = 20, 22.5%)

Trust/good relationship with law enforcement
(n = 12, 13.5%)

Findings (N = 89)

HUMAN TRAFFICKING DATA

40.4%



Two out of every five (n = 36) participants reported experiencing **at least one form of exploitation.**

12.4%



(n = 11) reported experiencing **both sex trafficking and labor exploitation.**

Sex Trafficking Data ($N = 21$)

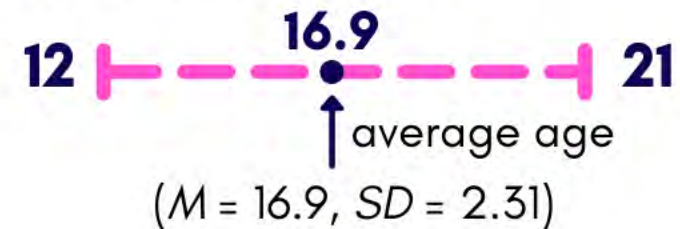
SEX TRAFFICKING ($N = 21$)

About **one in every four**



($n = 21$, 23.6%) participants reported experiencing sex trafficking.

The age of 1st sex trafficking experience ranged from



38.1%

($n = 8$) of those that reported experiencing a sex trafficking situation were **first sex trafficked under the age of 18.**

UNDER
18