

**HSOC Ad Hoc Youth Committee**  
**May 6, 2014, 9-10am**  
**DSS, 3433 S. Higuera, SLO, room 356**

**Attendees:**

Jessica Thomas (Chair), Martin Meltz, Janna Nichols, Rebecca Turner, Elise Roberts, Leigh Livick, Linda Pierce, Laurel Weir (via phone), Nicole Holst

Jessica Thomas presented the preliminary, draft results from the two surveys conducted, one for youth aged 11-25 and one for youth aged 18-25. Additional surveys are still in the process of being collected and she expects at least 8 more.

**Summary of Survey Results Youth Ages 11-25:**

- About 30 surveys were collected in schools thus far, all were between ages of 15-23 and mostly female
- Housing: Most are staying with friends (couch-surfing) without parents, none wanted to stay in shelter
- Needs: Listed clothing as most needed and then food, shoes, help for college, dentists, job, not interested in reproductive health help or enrolling in services at all
- Food: Most get their food through free meals at school, then CalFresh, friends and relatives, 6% get no help with food
- Barriers to food: 76% said no barriers and top chosen reason was “no place to cook/store food”
- Jessica Thomas stated an existing issue with getting CalFresh if parents are already receiving in their name, has been working with Suzanne Garcia to remedy this on a case by case basis
- 64% stated they are receiving help from community citing ECHO, LINK, Alpha, Tree of Life, school and church as places they go to receive services
- Most reported they heard of these services from an adult at school
- Most reported the thing that most keeps them from getting help is that they prefer to stay out of sight, then transportation and embarrassment next
- Type of Housing Interested In? Most answered they would prefer to live alone with help paying rent
- When asked if doctors/nurses refused care to them most answered no, but they may also not be trying to access care
- 83% had not heard of the McKinney-Vento act or other laws in their favor
- Most answered they were enrolled in school, however most of these surveys were administered at schools
- When asked why they were not in school most answered they had graduated from high school, and then “did not feel welcome”, “too far behind”, “no childcare” and “too stressed”
- 4% answered they would like to go back to school, when asked how they could be helped to go back they answered most commonly “a friend to support me”, “safe stable housing” and “transportation” in that order
- When asked about services they access at school 72% answered “food”, then “friends”, “adults who care”, “computer access”, “tutoring” in that order

### Summary of Survey Results for Youth Ages 18-25:

- 24 surveys collected thus far, mostly male, no one age 25
- Housing: Most are staying temporarily with friends, and then in a car/tent etc. only 6% in shelters
- Needs: Most said a "Safe, stable place to live" then food, clothes, shoes, job, dentist/medical in that order
- Food: 65% reported skipping meals, most get food from friends or relatives or CalFresh
- As in the younger youth survey most reported lack of a place to store/cook food as their biggest barrier to food
- 43% got help from the community through churches, shelters, One Stop, WIA and relatives
- Most heard about services from other youth with another 23% getting info from case managers or social workers
- 80% report "feeling embarrassed or ashamed" as the main reason they do not seek services with transportation being the next main reason
- Housing: Reported the same as the younger youth, most reported "living on their own with someone helping them pay rent" as the main housing they would prefer, 21% said staying with a friend or relative and 0% said shelters
- Most reported that they had not been refused care by medical staff, but again they may not be seeking services at all
- 58% said they were not attending school, 41% said yes (mostly at Cuesta)
- When asked why not attending school most answered that they do not have enough time because they are trying to meet their basic needs, then listed other factors such as "too stressed", "no money or financial aid", "safety", "no childcare" and had pets to look after as other reasons
- 84% said they would like to go back to school and could use help with housing, financial aid, flexible school hours, clothing, hygiene and transportation
- When asked about other services they needed they answered: people to trust, changes to illegal camping laws, housing with dogs, work, computer, transportation, job
- When asked if anything else they wanted us to know in terms of needs or hopes they answered: help with hormone therapy, medication for ADHD, to be the same as other kids, money for home, housing with dogs

Rebecca Turner from Mountainbrook Community Church provided a summary of what they found out regarding sex trafficking/exploitation surveys that were conducted:

- 15 youth surveys were collected with attached additional questions regarding sex trafficking, more are in the process of being collected currently. It was difficult to find youth and multiple attempts were made at the same location.
- 6 surveys were collected at the Mission in 4 weeks - most were females ages 18-24, with 1 being 17, out of these 2 of them admitted to survival sex, 4 knew of someone doing it, and 5 out of the 6 had significantly older boyfriends
- 5 surveys were conducted at Mountainbrook Church while it was being organized as an overflow shelter. 2 out of 5 knew people who were having survival sex, and 1 male knew of 4 underage girls who were being prostituted by their parents in Oceano

- 2 surveys were collected in Atascadero and both people knew people who were trading oral sex for \$15 or for drugs, in exchange for sleeping on couches
- 1 underage person interviewed commented that she liked the survey and thought it was a very good idea to tie it to the Unaccompanied Youth survey, instead of doing it separately. She said it was written in a way that could allow her to tell the truth without being too specific, which she liked. She reported knowing one girl in Morro Bay who earned money to pay fines for her boyfriend that is in jail. Another girl in Oceano is engaging in survival sex with a man whose boyfriend asked him to care for her while he is in jail for a gang related offense. The surveyed girl is willing to provide future feedback if needed.
- In 1/3 of those surveyed there is no labor trafficking
- In 1/3 of those surveyed there is exploitation
- Rebecca recommended a National Trafficking Hotline be posted at locations frequented by girls who may be victimized by this. She suggested the bus stop at Prado and said Alameda County has a good example of this.
- Mountainbrook is working with the Community Collaborative formed by DSS, which has an Identification Sub-Committee, to red flag participants that come in who are possibly affected and on tailoring intake forms.

The group agreed to give CAPSLO another 30 days to submit their Youth surveys and to add this information to that already gathered before the next Ad Hoc Youth meeting. Jessica Thomas said she would be in touch to discuss when the next meeting would be. The full report of the findings, once compiled, will be presented at the next available Full HSOC meeting.