The Housing Needs of LGBTQ Homeless Older Youth and Their Preferred Housing Options

Report Prepared for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and HIV Unit of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission

By
Meg Robertson, MSW
June 17, 1998
# Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Background 2
   Abuse Experiences of LGBTQ Youth 3
   Obstacles to Out-of-Home Care Placement for LGBTQ Youth 4
   Heightened Risk for LGBTQ Homeless Youth 5
   Limitations of Existing Services for Runaway and Homeless Youth 7
   Gaps in Services and Funding Issues 8
Methodology 10
Findings 11
   Demographics of Sample 11
   Experiences With Homeless Youth Services 13
   Experiences With Homeless Adult Services 15
   Experiences of LGBTQ Youth Seeking Housing 16
   Preferred Housing Options and Important Characteristics 17
Limitations of Study 20
Conclusions and Recommendations 22
Appendix A 25
Appendix B 31
References 34
List of Tables

Table 1: Sexual Orientation  
Table 2: Racial and Ethnic Identification  
Table 3: Important Characteristics of Housing Options  
Table 4a: Importance of Having a Private Room (by sexual orientation)  
Table 4b: Importance of Safety for LGBTQ Youth (by sexual orientation)  
Table 4c: Importance of Allowing Couples to Live Together  
(by sexual orientation)  
Table 4d: Importance of Having No Curfew (by sexual orientation)
I. Introduction

In response to community concerns, the Human Rights Commission and the Youth Commission of San Francisco held a Hearing to Investigate the Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Youth on September 26, 1996. In several hours of testimony, over 50 speakers described needs related to employment, support services, discrimination, harassment, and access to appropriate housing, shelter, and health services. A report containing findings and recommendations was subsequently published by the Human Rights Commission (July 12, 1997).

Several of the 96 findings issued in the hearing report referred to the needs of homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQQ) youth, including the finding that "LGBTQQ youth who are homeless are in particular need because services and programs in schools and youth service agencies do not directly address their needs" (Human Rights Commission, 1997, p. 55). The report strongly recommended the development of adequate, safe, and "affirming" housing and shelter options for LGBTQQ homeless youth (Human Rights Commission, pp. 65-66). In support of these recommendations, I conducted an exploratory study with service-providers and youth1 to gain further insight into LGBTQQ homeless youth's experiences and their housing-related needs. I sought to answer the following questions:

- What are LGBTQQ and non-LGBTQQ homeless youth's experiences with existing housing-related services?
- What are LGBTQQ and non-LGBTQQ homeless youth's experiences seeking long-term housing?
- What types of housing options are needed for homeless youth, and specifically for LGBTQQ homeless youth?

My intention was that these findings would be useful in the development of appropriate services and housing options for LGBTQQ homeless youth.

1 Unless otherwise noted, the term "youth" will be used to indicate 12 to 25 year old people, and "older youth" will indicate 18 to 25 year olds.
II. Background

LGBTQQ youth are disproportionately represented in the population of homeless youth, yet there has been very little research on their experiences or needs. In a recent survey of 4,159 teens (assumed to be housed youth) in 59 high schools, 0.6% identified as gay or lesbian, 1.9% as bisexual, and 1.5% responded "not sure" (Durant, 1998, cited in PRNewswire, 1998). In comparison, study findings and estimates of the percentage of lesbian, gay, and bisexual homeless youth vary from 11% to 50%. In Kennedy's (1991) sample of 100 youth receiving case management services at the Larkin Street Youth Center, 21% "identified themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or undecided" (p. 578). In Forst's (1994a) sample of 160 homeless youths in San Francisco, 10.8% were "gay identified" (p. 106). A study with 620 homeless/street youths who received medical services at Children's Hospital Los Angeles found that 11% "identified themselves as being gay or bisexual at intake" (cited in Kruks, 1991, p. 515). None of these studies report an estimate of the transgender homeless youth population.

Considering the stigma of identifying as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, and particularly considering the lack of trust that homeless youth have for adults and "the system" (Kennedy, 1991, p. 577), it is likely that these self-reported statistics are low. Accordingly, the Los Angeles County Task Force on Runaway and Homeless Youth (1988) and the Seattle Commission on Children and Youth (1988) estimated that lesbian, gay, and bisexual homeless youth in these cities are actually 25-35% and 40% of the homeless youth population respectively (cited in Kruks, 1991). Similarly, the Hedric-Martin Institute estimates that at least 40-50% of homeless youth in New York City are gay or lesbian (Buchanan, 1995).

Estimates of transgender youth, let alone homeless transgender youth, are much harder to come by. However, there are indications that transgender youth may also be over-represented in the homeless population. At the San Francisco Human Rights Commission's Hearing to Investigate Discrimination Against Transgender People (hereafter called "HRC Transgender Hearing"), Rachel Timoner from the Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center (LYRIC), a LGBTQ youth organization, testified that 15-20% of the 10,000 "talkline" calls received within one year were from "transgendered or gender-questioning young people" (Human Rights Commission, 1994, p. 30). At the Hearing to Investigate the Needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Youth (hereafter called "HRC LGBTQ Youth Hearing"), a LYRIC talkline volunteer testified that 35-40% of calls she answered were "about gender (identity) issues," and that
unemployment and homelessness were frequently brought up by these callers (Human Rights Commission, 1996, p. 60).

The literature suggests that abuse experiences in the home, schools and community and the lack of appropriate out-of-home care placements for LGBTQQ youth (under 18 years) contribute to this over-representation of LGBTQQ youth in the homeless youth population (Buchanan, 1995; Human Rights Commission, 1997; Kruks, 1991; Mallon, 1992).

Abuse Experiences of LGBTQQ Youth

LGBTQQ youth experience high levels of abuse and harassment in their homes, at school, and elsewhere in their communities. Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) conducted a study of 194 lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth (15-21 years old) from 14 communities across the United States in which the youth were asked whether they had experienced nine kinds of abuse, and where they experienced this abuse. On average, individuals reported experiencing three of the nine forms of victimization, and understood these incidents to be related to their sexual orientation. Close to one-third of the respondents had objects thrown at them (33%) or had been chased or followed (31%). Close to one-fifth of the respondents reported that they had been physically assaulted (i.e., punched, hit, kicked, or beaten), and almost one-quarter (22%) reported a sexual assault "as a result of their sexual orientation" (p. 40).

Pilkington and D'Augelli (1995) found that lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth experience a great deal of this abuse specifically in the context of their families and in their schools. More than a third (36%) of the youth were "verbally insulted at least once" by a family member; 22% of the females, and 14% of the males were verbally threatened by family members. Family members had assaulted 10% of the youth (18% of these were female youth, 8% were male). In the context of school, 28% of males and 19% of females said that they feared being "physically hurt by students and teachers" if they were open about their sexuality. About one-third of male (35%) and female (30%) respondents reported that "being harassed or verbally abused in school currently limits their openness about their sexual orientation" (pp. 37-44). These findings are corroborated by Durant (1998, cited in PRNewswire, 1998), who found that more than one-fourth of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth in his

---

2 Areas of abuse were specified as follows: (1) verbal insults, (2) threats of physical violence, (3) having one's personal property damaged or destroyed, (4) being chased or followed, (5) being spat upon, (6) having objects thrown at one's body, (7) being punched, hit, kicked or beaten, (8) sexual assault, (9) assault with a weapon.
sample had missed school in the previous 30 days "because of fear," compared with just 5.1% of the heterosexual youth (p. 31).

These statistics were also reflected in testimony at the HRC LGBTQ Youth Hearing. Youth testified to harassment and abuse they have experienced or witnessed in schools, juvenile hall, and other community contexts. One young woman who came out to her parents when she was 15 recalled, "When I came out, I wasn't really thinking about where I was going to stay, what I was going to eat and things like that. I didn't think it was going to be an issue. But...once I came out, it became an issue because I was no longer welcomed in my home" (Human Rights Commission, 1996, pp. 30-31).

This high level of harassment and abuse has dangerous consequences for the physical and psychological health of these youth, including increased risk of becoming homeless or attempting suicide; a 1989 report from the Department of Health and Human Services cites studies showing that LGBTQ youths attempt suicide at "three to six times the rate of their nongay counterparts" (Kruks, 1991, p. 517).

**Obstacles to Out-of-Home Care Placement for LGBTQ Youth**

When LGBTQ youth experience abuse in their homes, they do not have the same opportunities for out-of-home placement as other youth. Mallon (1992) found that the Human Resources Administration in New York City considers gay and lesbian youth "hard-to-place children" (p. 549). They are often denied placement in out-of-home care settings because agencies cite lack of knowledge of how to serve them. Some of these agencies are "sectarian...where moral attitudes toward homosexuality preclude program planning for the homosexual adolescent" (p. 549). He suggests that child welfare administrators and policy-makers have contributed to this lack of capacity by failing to discuss and implement plans for treatment of LGBTQ youth.

Further, Mallon (1992) found that, when they are placed out-of-home, gay and lesbian adolescents often have negative experiences because of lack of acceptance and harassment by other youth and some staff. The "lack of appropriate program planning makes their lives in many of the settings intolerable, compelling them in many cases to return to the streets for safety" (p. 547). While Mallon’s inquiries were not inclusive of transgender or gender-questioning youth, these findings suggest a broader lack of appropriate out-of-home placements for youth who vary from heterosexual and gender identity "norms."
In San Francisco, service-providers spoke at the HRC LGBTQ Youth Hearing of their efforts to create appropriate out-of-home placements for LGBTQ youth (Human Rights Commission, 1996). Evelyn Poates and Thomas Rutherford of the Department of Human Services (DHS) Teen Unit testified that they use "gay sensitive and lesbian, gay, bisexual foster homes to provide placement services" to these homeless adolescents, and reported that "many...young people have stabilized incredibly well" in such supportive environments (p. 129). Diane Manning of Larkin Street Youth Center, a non-profit homeless and runaway youth agency, testified that they collaborate with the Department of Human Services Teen Unit, and also have "gay sensitive" foster care placements for LGBTQ youth. (p. 134).

However, foster care placement is not an appropriate option for all homeless youth. Michael Kennedy, also of Larkin Street Youth Center, stated that most street youth who use their services are not stable enough for placement in foster homes (personal communication, October 3, 1997). Tony Noble of Hospitality House, another non-profit agency serving homeless and runaway youth, recommended alternatives to foster care and traditional group home placements, such as rental assistance for young people who can legally sign a lease, developing more jobs that pay living wages to young people on-their-own, and creating group homes "that are tenant-run by young people (so) that they can make the rules themselves and don't have to become part of the system to live in it" (Human Rights Commission, 1996, p. 141). A primary obstacle to creating these alternatives is the lack of funding (Pires & Silber, 1991).

**Heightened Risk for LGBTQ Homeless Youth**

Abuse at home and school, and the limitations of out-of-home placements, leave many LGBTQ youth with the street as their only option. Once on the streets, they face higher risks than heterosexual homeless youth. Kruks (1991) found that gay and bisexual males are more likely to attempt suicide and engage in survival sex than nongay homeless youth. He drew his conclusions from case-management intake data of 800 lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth (13-23 years old) who attended the Youth Services Department of the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Service Center (GLCSC), and statistics from intake files of 620 street youths who received services at Children's Hospital in Los Angeles. In the Children's Hospital Los Angeles sample, "72% of males involved in survival sex identify themselves as gay or bisexual" (p. 516). In the same sample, 13% of all street youth had their first sexual experience between ages 10 and 14, while 55% of lesbian, gay, or bisexual-
identified street youth had their first sexual experience during the same years. More than half (53%) of gay street youth served by the Youth Services Department of the GLCSC had attempted suicide at least once, and 47% more than once. In comparison, 32% of the Children’s Hospital Los Angeles sample, of which 11% were gay-identified youth, had attempted suicide. Kruks suggested that "many gay youths literally feel that, as gays, being a prostitute or street person is all they are good for. A life where they are used and badly treated fits their self-image" (p. 517).

Though there have not been any studies focused on the experiences of transgender homeless youth, an assessment of HIV-prevention and health service needs in the transgender communities (San Francisco Department of Public Health, AIDS Office, 1997) suggests that transgender homeless youth may also engage in high-risk behavior and experience severe psychological conflict. The assessment was conducted with 100 people (18 years and older) through 11 focus groups located at several service locations frequented by homeless and insecurely-housed people. Focus group participants discussed factors which threaten their psychosocial and physical health, including discrimination, problems of poverty and unemployment, police harassment, low-self esteem and depression, and problems receiving medical attention for transgender-specific health concerns. The study found that participants had three primary areas of HIV-related risk: 23% self-disclosed that they engaged in commercial sex work; 20% engaged in unprotected sex, and 18% said that they had substance abuse problems.

Pfeffer (1997) found that homeless lesbian youth who let their feelings for other girls be a known experience rejection and harassment by homophobic peers and risk losing the acceptance and protection of their "street family." She gained insight into the experiences of young women living "on-their-own" in San Francisco through in-depth interviews with 10 young women who primarily identified with the Punk and squatter subcultures. "A number of girls did not tell their friends their sexual feelings towards other girls because they did not want to jeopardize their tenancy in the squat" (p. 45). Exclusion from the squat would expose them to the greater risk of surviving on the streets without this community. Pfeffer also found evidence that girls have "less rights in the squats," specifically that male youth determine key aspects such as access to space and acceptance of new squat residents. She concludes that this "role of the male as spatial organizer of the squat is particularly detrimental to a young lesbian" who may not have a primary attachment to a male youth. Further, one of the youth commented on the potential risk of physical violence toward lesbians in street communities: "No, girls cannot
have sex with girls. No, I would have got my ass kicked" (p. 66). Pfeffer's findings indicate that being openly lesbian may jeopardize both personal safety and access to shelter and support within street youth communities.

Limitations of Existing Services for Runaway and Homeless Youth

The literature suggests three basic problems with existing services for runaway and homeless youth, a serious lack of services and funds for services (Boyer, 1988; Forst, 1994a; Kennedy, 1991; Pires & Silber, 1991; Smart, 1991), federal and state requirements which deter youth from accessing services (Kennedy, 1991; Robertson, 1992), and inadequate coordination within the non-profit service realm, and between non-profits and government service-providers (Kennedy, 1991; Smart, 1991).

The responses of homeless and runaway youth to existing services demonstrate the impact of these problems. In San Francisco, almost one-quarter (23%) of homeless and runaway youth surveyed (N = 128) by the Poverty and Homelessness Summit Outreach Team responded to the question "What services have worked best for you or your clients?" with "no programs have worked" (Mayor's Office, 1996, p. 17). Similarly, Miller, Miller, and Hoffman (1980, in Robertson, 1992) found that 55% of runaways they surveyed in New York found "no agency to be helpful" (p. 294). They hypothesized that youth didn't feel safe accessing services because of the risk that they would be "remanded to the authorities" (p. 294). They also cited the lack of adequate funding, and well-trained staff as contributing factors.

LGBTQQ youth face the additional issue of whether the available services, shelter, or housing will be accepting and safe. Tony Noble, from Hospitality House, testified at the HRC LGBTQQ Youth Hearing that "while many of the needs of (LGBTQQ) homeless youth are the same as any homeless youth regardless of sexual orientation...queer youth need to have services that are not only sensitive to queer youth, but proactively and aggressively developed and promote a trusting and accepting environment for one's queerness and one's homelessness" (Human Rights Commission, 1996, pp. 136-137). He suggested that, in addition to training staff about the psycho-social needs of LGBTQQ youth, "all agencies and organizations need to incorporate queer issues, subjects and concerns into all programming curriculum and treatments" (pp. 137).

One blatant example is the need for uniform and respectful policies and protocols regarding shelter access for transgender people. Some agencies require
transgendered people to get medical documentation, psychiatric forms, a referral from a transgender agency, or some other validation of their stated gender before admitting them to the shelter. Christine Tayleur, a member of Transgender Nation and board member of Communities United Against Violence, testified that transgendered people often "remain without shelter" due to such requirements and other discrimination (Human Rights Commission, 1994, p. 22).

Gaps in Services and Funding Issues

Currently, medical, substance abuse treatment, and shelter/housing services are provided to only a small percentage of homeless youth who need them. Nationwide, only one-fourth of homeless youths who contacted shelters got medical services. In California, while 5,554 youths were seen by federally-funded shelters in 1989, "only 234 (4.2%) received or were referred for medical services, 177 (3.2%) for psychological services, and 295 (3.7%) for drug and alcohol treatment" (Forst, 1994a, p. 111). Based on two years of research with 40 homeless youth in Portland, Oregon, Boyer (1998) concluded: "many services that would seem to be necessary for an exit (from the streets, including employment programs, skills development, intensive therapy, substance abuse treatment, and long-term housing)...were not used because they were severely limited, not because youth were uninterested" (p. 222). Boyer and her colleagues observed that youth returned to the streets as service resources ran out.

In San Francisco, the most significant gaps are in shelter, housing, and substance abuse treatment for youth. While at least 2,000 homeless or runaway youth under 18 access the Homeless Youth Network annually (HomeBase, 1997), there only are two shelters for youth under 18 years (Huckleberry House and Diamond Street Youth Shelter) with a total capacity of 26. There are several group homes for youth under 18, including two for LGBTQQ youth (Amassi and Bobbie's Love and Care Rainbow Group Home), but they are generally more restrictive than many street youth will tolerate. There is presently no permanent shelter for older homeless youth, and just three transitional living programs which combined have the capacity for approximately 40 older youths (Guerrero House, Avenues for Independence, and Hospitality House). Larkin Street Youth Center's Aftercare program provides "scattered site" housing with case management for up to 90 HIV+ older youth (up to 23 years old). Meanwhile, there are just 1,460 shelter beds available for 11,000 to 14,000 adult homeless people on any given night (Coalition
on Homelessness, 1997). Older homeless youth who want to access adult shelters have to "lottery" into those few spots along with the rest of the adults.

Almost half (43%) of youth surveyed by the Poverty and Homelessness Summit Outreach Team (Mayor's Office, 1996) in San Francisco responded that healthcare was important to help them get out of homelessness and find stable housing, and 58% of those respondents indicated that they wanted access to drug/alcohol treatment. Meanwhile, there is no residential drug detox program for youth in San Francisco, yet they are expected to be clean and sober when they enter long-term treatment programs. In addition, "access to current services requires funding from sources that include private and state insurance, or allocations from state mental and social service agencies" such as DHS (Kennedy, 1991, p. 578). Youth under 18 must gain access to these sources of funding through dependence on either their parent(s) or guardian(s) (and thus access to private insurance or Medicare), or by involvement with DHS. Both of these options are unlikely since most homeless youth are alienated from their parent(s)/guardian(s) and from public systems of support such as DHS. Theoretically, older homeless youth can access adult services; however, there are only 600 publicly-funded substance abuse treatment beds and approximately 1400 people in San Francisco on waiting lists for treatment every day (HomeBase, 1997).

National and state funding issues play a large role in the lack of adequate services for homeless youth. Beginning with the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, government resources were committed to social services for homeless and run-away youth, but unfortunately, the funding has never been adequate (Robertson, 1992). Since the beginning of the 1980s, the demand for housing, shelter, and other services has grown, coinciding with the decrease in funding availability; between 1980 and 1986, federal funding for social services declined 40% (Pires & Silber, 1991). This dearth of government funding has continued into the present decade. In 1996, HUD Homelessness Funding was reduced by 28% for California, a cut of $41 million per year (HomeBase, 1997). Meanwhile, private foundations tend to "fund only new and innovative programs, and not ongoing operations" (Silber & Pires, 1991), leaving non-profit agencies without stable, non-governmental sources of funding to maintain new and old programs. Without sufficient funding, public and non-profit agencies are unable to provide the comprehensive services which are necessary to help youth leave street life (Boyer, 1988; Kennedy, 1991).
III. Methodology

I distributed surveys to 51 older homeless youth (see Appendix A) on the street and at six of the primary locations where older homeless and insecurely-housed youth can access services in San Francisco.\(^3\) Access to the youth utilizing services was permitted and facilitated by staff. I also conducted telephone interviews (see Appendix B) with six service-providers, taking notes on their responses during the interviews. Most of my research demonstrates the "perceived need" for housing and housing-related services. In addition, extrapolation from existing surveys and review of existing resource inventories provided me with a sense of the "normative need," and service statistics and waiting list information provided me with an idea of the "expressed need" (Kettner, 1990, pp. 54-66).

I developed my conclusions through convergent analysis, a process of integration and synthesis of the information and perspectives gathered to provide a "reasonably viable portrait" of the communities' perceptions (Royse, 1993, p. 25). I determined primary themes through several readings of the service-provider interviews, and balanced their perceptions of the youth's needs and experiences with the youth's comments and survey responses. I used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to analyze the youth survey data, creating tables and comparing percentages of their responses. Cross-tabulation of variables indicated some possible relationships between variables, though the sample was not large enough to allow for determination of statistical significance. I triangulated my findings with those of other studies to consider the reliability of my observations.

---

\(^3\)The six locations were: Ark of Refuge Young Adult Shelter (emergency shelter, ceased operation 4/19/98), Haight Street, Haight Asbury Referral (service of Larkin Street Youth Center), Hospitality House (outreach), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, and Guerrero House (service of Catholic Charities).
IV. Findings

Demographics of Sample

Almost half (43.2%) of the youth surveyed identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or questioning (See Table 1, below), and these youth were found at almost every one of the survey locations. One location clearly identified by LGBTQ youth as "theirs" was the Eureka Valley Recreation Center, where six of the seven youth surveyed identified as LGBTQ. Other locations also reported high percentages of LGBTQ youth. Staff reported that over half the youth at Guerrero House identified as LGBTQ, and that they house three or four transgender youth each year. Larkin Street Youth Center staff estimated that three-quarters of youth accessing their services are gay and bisexual young men, 7% are transgender, and less than 1% are lesbians or bisexual women. An estimated 40% of youth accessing Hospitality House are LGBTQ, and 1% are transgender.

Table 1: Sexual Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Label</th>
<th>Frequency (N=51)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>heterosexual</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bisexual</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lesbian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gay</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questioning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than one</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>category chosen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>queer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean age of respondents to the survey was 19 (SD=3.34), and three-quarters of the survey sample were 20 or younger. Almost 50% of the sample were either 18 (19.6%) or 19 (29.4%) years old. Twenty-year olds constitute 17.6% of the sample.

There were three peak ages at which youth "first became homeless or started to live on the streets": 13.7% at 13 years old, 19.6% at 16 years old, and 11.8% at 18 years old. Almost 20% of the sample were first homeless or on the streets by the time they were 13 years old, and almost 80% by the time they were 18 years old. The mean age of first experience of homelessness was 14 (SD=5.48).
There were almost equal numbers of male and female identified respondents, with 21 (41.2%) female and 22 (43.1%) male. Three respondents (5.9%) identified as transgender, one female-to-male and the other two male-to-female.

At 39.2% of the sample, white youth constituted a smaller majority in my study than in other studies (Forst, 1994a, 1994b; Kennedy, 1991; National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, 1991). Otherwise, the racial breakdown of this sample was similar to those studies. The complete data on race and ethnicity are presented in Table 2 (below). No one identified solely as Native American, however, 9.8% (n=5) said they were Native American (specifically, Sioux, Cheyenne, Cherokee, Pontiac, Kickapoo, and Syan) mixed with other racial identities. No one identified as African or Middle Eastern.

**Table 2: Racial and Ethnic Identification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Label</th>
<th>Frequency (N=51)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/white</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than one category chosen</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed race/ethnicity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Responses related to length of time in San Francisco and in California indicate that many youth have been in San Francisco for a short time, however, they have been in California longer. Almost half (47.1%) of the sample had been in San Francisco less than six months, and 11.8% for 6-12 months. More than a third (39.2%) had been in San Francisco for more than 12 months. The majority (58.8%) of these youth have been in California for more than 12 months, and a little over 10% have been in California for 6-12 months. Just over a quarter (27.5%) have been in the state less than six months. These patterns are supported by Kennedy's (1991) findings which indicated a high percentage of youth in his study were from out-of-county, but more than half were from within California.

Almost 40% of the youth in my study "live on the streets" either "all of the time" (21.6%) or "most of the time (more than two weeks each month)" (17.6%). Over a third (37.3%) indicated that they live on the streets "some of the time (less
than two weeks each month)." These data indicate that more than half of these youth manage to find an inside place to stay for at least part of each month.

When not on the streets, 25.5% indicated that they live in a shelter, while 11.8% live "at a friend's house or apartment." Over half (54.9%) responded that they stay in a combination of off street places, including shelters, at a friend's house or apartment, in a group home, and other options. They specified these "other" options as residential hotels, motels, a ship, squats, Haight Street, "my house in Connecticut," and staying with family. One gay male responded: "I go home with older dudes."

Basic demographic information gathered from my sample shows some marked differences from that gathered in studies of homeless youth 18 years and younger. There were 20%-30% more LGBTQ youth in my sample than in studies with youth under 18 (Forst, 1994a, 1994b; Kennedy, 1991; Kruks, 1991). My sample has almost equal numbers of male and female respondents, about 10% fewer girls than studies of youth under 18 (Forst, 1994a, 1994b; Kennedy, 1991), and includes transgender people, who are not included in any other study of homeless youth I have seen. Just 30% of my sample indicated that they had ever been in foster care, almost 20% fewer than samples of youth under 18 (Kennedy, 1991; Family and Youth Services Bureau, 1995). These differences raise serious questions as to whether it is useful to generalize conclusions from data gathered about youth under 18 to the older youth population.

Experiences With Homeless Youth Services

Over 90% of all youth surveyed (n=47) indicated that they had used at least one type of youth resource or agency to try to get housing. Over half (52.9%) had used Haight Ashbury Youth Outreach services, a drop-in center located near Haight Street, where they can get health- and housing-related referrals, support, food, clothing, and showers. Hospitality House and Larkin Street Youth Center both were used by almost half (47.1%) of the youth; both agencies run drop-in centers which provide access to case management, counseling, education completion, vocational programs, shelters, and housing programs. Notably, just two respondents indicated that they had accessed the Department of Human Services to try to get housing. This number speaks both to the fact that most have aged-out of the government-mandated services provided by DHS, and that, even when they were eligible for the services, these homeless youth did not think of DHS as a resource which would help them with housing.
Half of the LGBTQQQ youth indicated that the homeless youth services had provided resources to help them get housing. In comparison, 64.7% of the heterosexual youth surveyed indicated that they had been helped to get housing by homeless youth services. The youth's comments about how they were helped indicated that most had received support and referrals to shelters or transitional living programs. Notably, only one youth indicated that s/he had gained access to long-term housing through these services. Youth who indicated that these services were not helpful to get housing noted "long waiting lists," and age restrictions as significant limitations.

Some service-providers described their efforts to make services comfortable and accessible for LGBTQQQ youth, including having support groups and posting information about services available at LGBTQQQ-specific agencies. Both Hospitality House and Larkin Street Youth Center cited the fact that 40 to 50% of their staff are LGBTQQQ-identified. Most described informal collaborations with LGBTQQQ-specific youth agencies around projects and outreach efforts, though none had developed formal agreements about regular, ongoing services. "(D)espite the great intentions of all programs," one provider admitted, "you can't control the homophobic bias of other kids in the center. You can set the tone, create an environment, but it still happens." The same provider spoke about "rampant" homophobia in adult shelters.

One service-provider noted that though there are "a lot of services for queer youth,...they don't deal with youth with violence in their history." In other words, most homeless LGBTQQQ youth, who are dealing with histories of abuse and daily experiences of homelessness in addition to their sexual orientation issues, are underserved by existing LGBTQQQ youth agencies. Another provider said that homeless LGBTQQQ youth don't feel comfortable accessing support groups with housed LGBTQQQ youth, and in general, don't like being around them. She suggested that their life experiences and realities are so different that, despite the common experience of being sexual minority youth, homeless LGBTQQQ youth need services of their own. A service-provider from a transitional living program noted that "queer kids at (the house) have really complex issues compared with straight kids." Four among the service-providers surveyed thought there should definitely be housing and housing-related services specifically for homeless LGBTQQQ youth. Two service-providers, however, thought their problems were related more to mental and physical health, substance abuse, and homelessness, implying that services for issues related to sexual orientation are less crucial.
Experiences With Homeless Adult Services

More than half the youth surveyed had used adult meal sites (64.7%) and shelters (54.9%), while just over a quarter had used adult health centers (27.5%) and clothing distribution services (25.5%). The responses related to shelter and health center usage indicated that some respondents failed to distinguish between youth and adult services, listing the names of both youth and adult shelters in response to this question. The results, nevertheless, are useful indicators of their perception of services and their experiences with them.

Almost half (43.1%) of youth surveyed did not respond to an open-ended question that asked about their experience with adult services. Of the 29 who did, 15 (51.7%) made positive comments, 10 (34.5%) made both positive and negative comments or stated that the services were "okay," and four (13.8%) made negative comments. LGBTQQ and non-LGBTQQ youth gave nearly the same responses about adult services; seven LGBTQQ youth made positive comments about their experiences; another six indicated that their experiences were "okay" or "fine," while two indicated that they had bad experiences. Overall, the youth's positive comments indicated appreciation for the food and health services. The strongly negative comments about adult services were almost exclusively about the shelters:

- It was bullshit I was threatened or attacked at all of the above places. It's safer to stay away from those places.
- (Adult shelter) made me feel impersonal. (Another adult shelter) made me feel the same way and the food SUCKED.
- The (adult shelter) sucked! Because I was 18 years and everyone there was over 40 tweeked out!

Service-providers share similar views concerning the experiences of older youth (18-25 years old) accessing adult shelters. A service-provider who works with HIV+ older youth stated that he only refers them to shelters when all other options don't work out. He explained that they frequently are robbed and have to deal with sexually predacious older adults, and manipulation related to drugs. Another service-provider asserted "adult shelters aren't prepared to support youth." He has heard from youth that they don't feel comfortable accessing adult shelters and hypothesized that this is because the shelters are not physically safe for the youth and don't deal with issues important to them. Others corroborated these views of older youths' experiences, describing adult shelters as dangerous places, where they may get "molested" or "beat up." Young men who are "feminine" in some way, and young women who are very "butch" particularly get unwelcome "attention"
from older adults. One service-provider reported that youth trying to stay off drugs don't want to go to adult shelters because the drug activity there is a bad influence.

Adult shelters are a particular concern for transgender youth. A transgender young woman at the Ark of Refuge commented "I can't go to other shelters looking the way I do." Her trepidation about accessing adult shelters was corroborated by a service-providers who commented that while younger people already are treated poorly by other residents at the shelters, anyone who does not conform to gender stereotypical appearance is likely to get even more negative attention. Shelter accommodations are segregated by gender, and most agencies lack protocols regarding where and how transgender people should be sheltered. The potential for being humiliated or otherwise poorly treated deters many transgender youth.

Experiences of LGBTQQ Youth Seeking Housing

All (100%) of the LGBTQQ youth said it was "very important" or "important" to them to find long-term housing, while just over three-quarters (76.5%) of heterosexual youth gave it the same importance. LGBTQQ youth may have more motivation to find long-term housing because they face homophobia within the street youth communities. This hypothesis is supported by Pfeffer's (1997) findings that young lesbians in her study feared violence and alienation from their street communities if they were to be "out" about their feelings for women. Two of the young women in her study were only comfortable being "out" as lesbians once they were established in supportive, LGBTQQ-safe, foster homes. Muirhead (1997a, 1997b) reported witnessing verbal harassment of youth who are "known to have experimented with other girls or boys" by their homeless peers (personal communication, May 3, 1998). Such harassment and lack of acceptance may make the street communities less tolerable for LGBTQQ youth than for heterosexual youth.

Almost 20% more LGBTQQ youth (77.3%) than heterosexual youth (58.8%) had tried to find long-term housing, but slightly fewer LGBTQQ youth (13.6% versus 17.6%) had ever had long-term housing in San Francisco or the surrounding area. The reasons for this difference are unclear. It is possible that more LGBTQQ youth are transplants to San Francisco due to the City's reputation for tolerance, and thus fewer would have reported ever having lived in long-term housing with family in the area. It also may be that greater effort to find long-term housing does not necessarily translate into more success finding long-term housing in the context of a severe lack of affordable housing. A third possible explanation is LGBTQQ youth
have more difficulty finding long-term housing. More research needs to be done before any of these possible explanations can be taken seriously.

**Preferred Housing Options and Important Characteristics**

Youth in my sample clearly preferred more independent housing models. More than 80% of the respondents chose apartment living (described as "independent, no services/assistance attached") as their first or second most preferred option. The next most preferred housing option was a supported living program (described as "apartment living with some support services, like money management, counseling and on-site peer counselor"), chosen by 62.7% as their first or second choice. The transitional living program option (described as "up to 18 months in structured program like Guerrero House or Avenues for Independence, services on-site") was chosen as first or second choice by 56.9%. The group home and foster care options were each chosen as first and second preferred options by less than ten percent of respondents.

More than half of the youth surveyed indicated that having a private room was the most important characteristic in a housing option. The three next most important factors, each chosen as "most important" by more than a quarter of the youth, were having no curfew, allowing couples to live together, and being safe for LGBTQQQ youth who are out about their identities. Responses to this question are presented in Table 3 (below), and are organized in order of highest combined percentage of "most important" and "second most important" responses. This presentation shows more accurately the relative importance of the factors to these youth.⁴

---

⁴For the questions related important characteristics of housing options, some youth indicated more than one variable as "most important," "second most important," etc. for the same question. Therefore, sum percentages and numbers of youth choosing related variables will add up to more than 100%, or the number of youth surveyed.
Table 3: Important Characteristics of Housing Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Label</th>
<th>Most Important (N=51)</th>
<th>2nd Most Important (N=51)</th>
<th>Combined Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have private room</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have no curfew</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be okay for couples to live together</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be safe for LGBTQ youth who are out</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allow pets</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be drug free</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>housing for people who have children</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be alcohol free</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have spaces to hang out with other residents</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff person or counselor on-site</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allow drugs</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allow alcohol</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other factors</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LGBTQQ youth and non-LGBTQQ youth demonstrated similar priorities related to housing characteristics. For both groups, having a private room is the most important factor (see Table 4a). The next most important factor chosen by LGBTQQ youth was "be safe for LGBTQ youth who are out" (see Table 4b), while it was next most important for heterosexual youth that couples be allowed to live together (see Table 4c). Both of these factors were also significantly important to the other group of youth. Having no curfew was almost equally important to both groups, with over a third of each choosing this factor as "most important" or "second most important" (see Table 4d).

Table 4a: Importance of Having a Private Room (by sexual orientation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>2nd Most Important</th>
<th>Combined Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQQ</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4b: Importance of Safety for LGBTQ Youth (by sexual orientation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>2nd Most Important</th>
<th>Combined Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4c: Importance of Allowing Couples to Live Together (by sexual orientation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>2nd Most Important</th>
<th>Combined Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4d: Importance of Having No Curfew (by sexual orientation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>2nd Most Important</th>
<th>Combined Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to these preferred characteristics, both LGBTQ and non-LGBTQQ youth emphasized that they want to have control of and responsibility for establishing the organization and structure in their housing situation.
V. Limitations of Study

The chief limitations of this study are in the survey instrument itself and method of distribution. The survey format, although effective at collecting responses from a large group of respondents and, perhaps, freeing up responses by allowing for anonymity, was not effective in gaining insight into the deeper qualities of the youth's experiences and opinions. I was able to gain only a basic understanding of the youth's experiences with accessing existing services and seeking housing, and their opinions about what services should be available. The few open-ended questions included in the youth survey were answered by just half the respondents, and even then only briefly. I would have been able to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences had I provided avenues for follow-up conversations.

Survey distribution occurred primarily in the context of service-provision, causing sample bias in favor of consumers of services versus non-users. The time period available for surveying (mid-February through the beginning of April) was influenced by two environmental factors that made it very difficult to reach youth out on the streets. The first was unusually heavy and prolonged rain fall throughout the winter months in San Francisco caused by El Nino. In response to the severe weather, Mayor Willie Brown opened emergency shelters throughout the City, including the Ark of Refuge shelter, and one located close to the Haight area. The second factor was a movement to eradicate homeless people from Golden Gate Park, prompted by a local news story alleging that the Park was sheltering criminals and drug dealers (Garcia, October 30, 1997). Mayor Brown reacted to these allegations by calling in the police, who rousted homeless adults and youth and seized their belongings in several sweeps of the park over a two-to-three-week period. The end result was that most of the large population of youth living in Golden Gate Park dispersed to the streets in other neighborhoods, sought shelter, or left town. The combination of weather and political upheaval caused the streets to be peculiarly empty of homeless youth, and those who remained on the streets were experiencing a total disruption of their community. Though it may have been an opportune time for organizing, it was not a good time for surveying.

By conducting most of the surveys in service-provision contexts, I missed youth who are alienated from services, or have found them unhelpful and thus have stopped accessing them. A survey of homeless and street youth across the nation by the Family and Youth Service Bureau (FYSB) (1995) found that 56% of the 600 youth in their street sample had never used a youth shelter, indicating that my
study did not access a significant population of street youth. In addition, the FYSB (1995) findings suggest that "youth who had spent time in shelters (those in the shelter sample) generally had positive opinions about them. Nearly 87% said that shelters could 'help kids like me figure out what to do with their lives'" (p. 8). The results of my survey likely are biased toward positive response about services, and may lack potentially valuable feedback from youth who may have more negative perceptions of services.

Besides failing to reach youth who don't often access services, my reliance on access to shelters, drop-in centers, and transitional living programs also limited the diversity of young people I could reach. Arrangements with service-providers worked out for the most part, but in one important instance they did not. Despite having a Spanish version of the survey, I was unable to survey the young men recently immigrated from South and Central America who access Dolores Street Services for shelter, and thus missed this population of young homeless people. Because of my Anglo identity and inability to speak fluent Spanish, I needed a Spanish-speaking service-provider known to these young men to introduce me as a means of overcoming the communication and trust barriers. Despite extensive efforts to coordinate with a service-provider who could assist me, I did not manage to survey this population.

This study puts forth an exploration of the needs and housing preferences of older youth. The possible biases and the gaps in sample population should be kept in mind when considering these findings.
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

Homeless youth in San Francisco are primarily served by a loose network of non-profit organizations struggling to maintain funding and services. Both youth and adult systems of service are overburdened: Guerrero House staff reported a two-to-three month waiting list; the Ark of Refuge young adult shelter turned away youth most nights it was in operation; youth with severe mental health and substance abuse issues lack housing options. LGBTQ youth and older homeless youth particularly lack appropriate services and housing options.

LGBTQQ homeless youth face severe homophobia within street youth communities. They need services and housing that will address their issues of homelessness along with their experiences as sexual minority youth. Despite the efforts of service-providers, drop-in centers and other service environments for homeless youth are not free of homophobia, and the LGBTQ-specific services for youth do not accommodate issues of homelessness. Adult shelters, which provide the only shelter options for older homeless youth, are unsafe for all youth and especially for LGBTQ youth.

In addition to more housing services in general, youth want more independent housing options. Current transitional living programs serve older youth who can tolerate aspects of a more institutional environment, such as curfews and on-site services as a part of daily life. The older youth in this study asserted the need for programs that allow them to be more independent, and give them a chance to be responsible. They want a home, a place where they would have some control over the situation, such as what the rules would be and who would live there. Some of their priorities include having private rooms, allowing couples to live together, having no curfew, and being safe for LGBTQ youth.

The lack of services is all the more critical in the context of an absence of affordable housing. Most youth have accessed some form of homeless youth services, and almost half feel that they have been helped to find housing. However, few actually found long-term housing. More than a third of the youth in my sample were working, and most had tried to find long-term housing, nevertheless, all were homeless or insecurely-housed. Commonly, the best that service-providers have been able to do is help them access shelters and transitional living programs. When even youth who have graduated from transitional living programs and those who are employed struggle to get long-term housing, the situation for other youth is dire.
LGBTQQ and non-LGBTQQ homeless youth have much in common in terms of their life experiences and the situations which lead them to the streets. In addition, their basic priorities reflect a common desire simply for more available housing, and greater control and responsibility within the options presented to them. It is crucial that researchers, policy-makers, service-providers, and others concerned about homeless LGBTQQ youth remember that "any attempts to address the needs of homeless LGBTQQ youth must examine the specific issues of LGBTQQ youth as well as the general issue of homelessness as a social problem" (Human Rights Commission, 1997, p. 55).

Based on the overall findings of this study, I would recommend the following research, policy, and programmatic steps to begin to address the needs of LGBTQQ homeless youth:

- Conduct a focused qualitative study of the experiences and needs of LGBTQQ homeless youth to guide the creation of housing and services that will serve all of their needs.
- Implement city-wide policies that ensure affordable housing. Youth who have graduated from existing transitional-living programs, who already have the skills to live on their own, or both, have no access to long-term housing.
- Develop services specifically for LGBTQQ homeless youth such as support groups for youth questioning their sexuality, and referrals to LGBTQQ-safe housing and shelter options.
- Develop safe and appropriate shelter and housing options as defined by LGBTQQ youth.
- Create a permanent shelter for older youth, modeled after the Ark of Refuge's experimental shelter. Such a shelter would be a valuable place for first contact with older youth new to San Francisco, or who may want to leave the streets, and would be safer than adult shelters for LGBTQQ older youth.
- Create alternative transitional living programs to house youth with mental illnesses and substance abuse issues.
- Develop supportive housing opportunities for older youth that will provide affordable housing, optional support services, more independence, and control over their living situation.
- Create a rental assistance fund for youth which will lend money to help with move-in costs and occasional problems with paying rent.
- Develop a movement to educate and organize homeless youth around the structural inequalities which contribute to their situation. This movement
would provide a means for focusing their anger and frustration toward the targets responsible for the poverty, lack of affordable housing, homophobia within service systems, and systems of services for younger youth which failed when they most needed help.

The problems these youth face will not be solved simply by the creation of new programs, or the adjustment of existing ones. While their experiences may be partly the product of "individual pathologies within a family structure," they are just as significantly manifestations of larger structural problems which destabilize and disenfranchise poor families (Pfeffer, 1997, p. 51). In addition to our focus on the struggles on individual youth, we must always consider what we can do to impact the larger societal context if we are to truly make an impact on these youth's lives.
Appendix A: Youth Survey

DO YOU WANT LONG-TERM HOUSING?

WHAT KINDS OF HOUSING DO YOU WANT?

WHAT WOULD HELP YOU TO FIND AND KEEP HOUSING?

This survey is a part of an effort to get funding for housing for older homeless youth (16-25 years old). We are interested in learning about what housing options you want, and about your experiences trying to get housing. Our purpose is to seek grant money for housing which you need and want.

We have developed a survey as a way to access your thoughts and ideas about housing issues. There are twenty-two questions and it will take about ten minutes to complete. It does not ask you for your name so that ALL ANSWERS WILL BE ANONYMOUS. In no way will your answers on this survey affect your ability to use housing services, shelters, or other programs. You may also decide not to answer these questions; this decision will NOT affect your ability to get services, shelter or housing. Filling out this survey will not guarantee housing for you, nor that this housing will be created. You are in no way obligated to take part in this survey. We would really appreciate your input.

**If you have questions about this survey, please call Meg at 252-2542.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues!
(Please check box next to response which most closely matches your opinion or experience.)

1.) How important is it to you to find long-term housing (i.e., a place where you can live for more than a year)?
   □ very important □ important □ somewhat important □ not important

2.) Have you tried to find long-term housing in San Francisco and/or the surrounding area (e.g., Oakland, Berkeley...)?
   □ Yes □ No

3.) Have you ever had long-term housing in San Francisco and/or the surrounding area (e.g., Oakland, Berkeley...)?
   □ Yes □ No

4. a.) Have you used any of the below agencies/resources to try to get housing?
   Check box next to agencies/resources tried:
   □ Hospitality House □ Guerrero House
   □ Dolores Street Services □ Larkin Street Youth Center
   □ Huckleberry House □ Homes Not Jails
   □ Department of Human Services □ Prodigal Project
   □ Haight Street Youth Outreach (HAYO) □ Other: __________________________

   b.) Did any of the above agencies provide resources to help you to get housing (like giving you referrals or advocating for you with a landlord)? □ Yes □ No

c.) If you answered yes, what made those agencies/resources helpful? ________________

   d.) If you answered no, what made those agencies/resources not helpful? ________________

5.) Have you used any of the so-called "adult" services listed below?
Check Box Next to Service Tried: Which one(s):
   □ Shelters (Multiservice Centers, Episcopal, etc.) __________________________
   □ Meal Sites (St. Anthony's, Glide, etc.) __________________________
   □ Clothing Distribution (St. Anthony's, etc.) __________________________
(Question 5, continued:)

□ Health Centers (Public Health Centers, etc.)  

6.) How was your experience using the above services?  

---------------------------------------------------------------------

---------------------------------------------------------------------

---------------------------------------------------------------------

IN QUESTIONS 7 - 10, PLEASE READ ALL CHOICES AND THEN RANK THEM.

7.) Which do you think are the three most important factors to help you get long-term housing? (Please rank them 1, 2, 3; 1= most important 2= second most important 3= third most important)

• assistance with first and last months rent  
• a job  
• access to drug recovery program  
• access to affordable apartments (i.e., rent = 1/3 of what you earn)  
• respect from landlords  
• Other: ____________________

8.) Which would be the three most important factors to help you keep housing once you got it? (Please rank them 1, 2, 3; 1= most important 2= second most important 3= third most important)

• stable job  
• help with money management/budgeting  
• help with resolving conflicts with people where you live  
• education completion program (e.g., GED, college)  
• access to drug treatment program  
• good roommates  
• good landlord  
• Other: ____________________
9.) Which would be the three types of housing you most want to live in? (Rank them 1, 2, 3; 1 = first choice
2 = second choice
3 = third choice)
___ • group home (state care facility)
___ • transitional living program (up to 18 months in structured program like Guerrero House or Avenues for Independence, services on site)
___ • supported living program (apartment living with some support services like money management, counseling, and on-site peer counselor)
___ • foster care
___ • apartment (independent, no services/assistance attached)
___ • Other: __________________________

10.) Which would be the five most important things about this place? (Rank them 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 1 = most important, 2 = second most important, etc.)
___ • have private room for each person
___ • be drug-free
___ • be alcohol-free
___ • allow pets
___ • be okay for couples to live together (both straight and gay)
___ • offer housing for people who have children
___ • have no curfew
___ • allow alcohol
___ • allow drugs
___ • have spaces to hang out with other residents (e.g., a yard, porch or common living room)
___ • be safe for gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender people who are out about their identities
___ • have staff person or counselor there 24 hours a day to help if you need it
___ • OTHER(S): ______________________

11.) Is it important to you that this housing option would be located in a specific neighborhood?  □ Yes  □ No  (If yes, which neighborhood? ___________)

28
THE NEXT FEW QUESTIONS ARE TO LET US KNOW A LITTLE MORE ABOUT YOU:

12.) Are you presently:
   • working (including day labor, part-time)? □ Yes □ No (If yes, where? ________________)
   • in a job training program? □ Yes □ No (If yes, where? ________________)
   • in school or education program? □ Yes □ No (If yes, where? ________________)

13.) Have you ever been in foster care? □ Yes □ No

14.) How old are you? ______

15.) How long have you lived in California?
   □ less than 6 months □ 6 - 12 months □ more than 12 months

16.) How long have you lived in San Francisco?
   □ less than 6 months □ 6 - 12 months □ more than 12 months

17.) How old were you when you first became homeless or started to live on the streets? ______

18.) How much of the time do you live on the street?
   □ all the time (except for occasional nights in shelter, at friends)
   □ most of the time (more than two weeks each month)
   □ some of the time (less than two weeks each month)

19.) When you are not on the street, where do you live?
   □ at a friend's house or apartment
   □ in a shelter
   □ in a group home
   □ Other: ________________________
20.) How do you identify yourself in terms of race and/or ethnicity? (Please mark as many categories as apply to you:)
   □ Native American (Which tribe or tribes? ________________)
   □ African American
   □ African (Which country or countries? ________________)
   □ Latino (specifically, which origin(s): ________________)
   □ Asian/Pacific Islander (specifically, which origin(s): ________________)
   □ Middle Eastern (Specifically, which origin(s): ________________)
   □ Mixed Race/Ethnicity (Specifically: ________________)
   □ Caucasian
   □ Other: ________________

21.) How do you identify in terms of sexual orientation?
   □ lesbian □ heterosexual
   □ queer □ gay
   □ questioning □ bisexual
   □ Other: ________________

22.) How do you identify yourself in terms of gender identity?
   □ Transgender (Please specify:) □ FTM (Female to Male)
   □ MTF (Male to Female)
   □ Male
   □ Female
   □ Other: ________________

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME AND THOUGHTS!
Appendix B: Service-Provider Interview Questions

I am conducting this telephone survey to gather information from people who are experienced in working with street youth in San Francisco. This information may be used to help shape a new housing option and/or housing related services specifically for older homeless youth (18 to 25 years old). Your answers may be incorporated into proposals and applications for funding. They may also be included in work to be published in journals. Primarily, though, your answers will help me and my colleagues to make the most of the depth of experience and knowledge which exists in San Francisco when we create housing and services.

The second part of this survey asks questions specifically about lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth. These questions are intended to get a sense of the numbers of LGBTQQ-identified youth who are accessing your programs, and to get a sense of how (if at all) agencies are tracking these youth.

1.) What is your target population? Do you have any use limits?

2.) How many youth access your program or services each year?

3.) Do you have any statistics available which breakdown gender, age, ethnicity/race, LGBTQQ identity?

4.) How many of these youth are 18+?

5.) In your experience assisting older youths who are seeking housing or shelter, what are the three most difficult obstacles you (and they) face?

6.) In your experience what are the three primary factors which enable older homeless youth to find and keep housing?

7.) What are your impressions of the experiences of youth aged 18-25 who access housing services for adults (e.g., Multi Service Centers)?
8.) Is (or are) there any subsection (or subsections) of youth street culture which you feel is (or are) more underserved than the general population of street youth? Or which you think needs special services or extra attention? WHICH? HOW SO?

9.) Do you track where youth go after they leave your program or use your services? If so, how track them? What happens to them?

10.) Do you have to turn youth away from your program due to lack of space? How many each month?

11.) If a new supported living program were created in San Francisco, how many youth can you think of who could use this type of housing option? (Describe further as: "an apartment building with subsidized apartments and on-site 24 hour a day peer "counselor," but no other on-site services; residents would have to have a job, or be pursuing education or vocational training")

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE TO GET A SENSE OF HOW MANY LGBTQ YOUTH ARE ACCESSING YOUR PROGRAM, AND HOW YOUR AGENCY TRACKS THEM:

12.) Do you track LGBTQ youth who use your program or services? If so, how do you track them? What may be obstacles to tracking them?

13.) Can you estimate the percentage of youth who access your services who are transgender identified?

14.) Can you estimate what percentage of youth who access your services are self-identified as gay or bisexual men?

15.) Can you estimate what percentage of youth who access your services are self-identified as lesbian or bisexual women?

16.) Do you think there is a need for any housing services or programs specific to LGBTQ youth?
17.) (IF NON-LGBTQQ AGENCY): Do you collaborate with any agencies which specifically serve LGBTQ youth (i.e., LYRIC, HIFY, LYFE, Queer Youth Training Collaborative)?

18.) (IF LGBTQQ AGENCY): Do you collaborate with any agencies which provide services to the general population of street/homeless youth?

19.) Would you be interested in the results of this survey? (If yes, may I fax them to you?)

Name: ________________________________
Position: ______________________________
Agency: ______________________________
Phone Number: ________________
    FAX Number: ____________________________
References


PRNewswire. (1998, May 7). Study shows gay teens' increased health risk. Bay Area Reporter


