

Community Fact Sheet

Hope 2011: 3rd Annual Community Service-Focused Event for Northwest Arkansas

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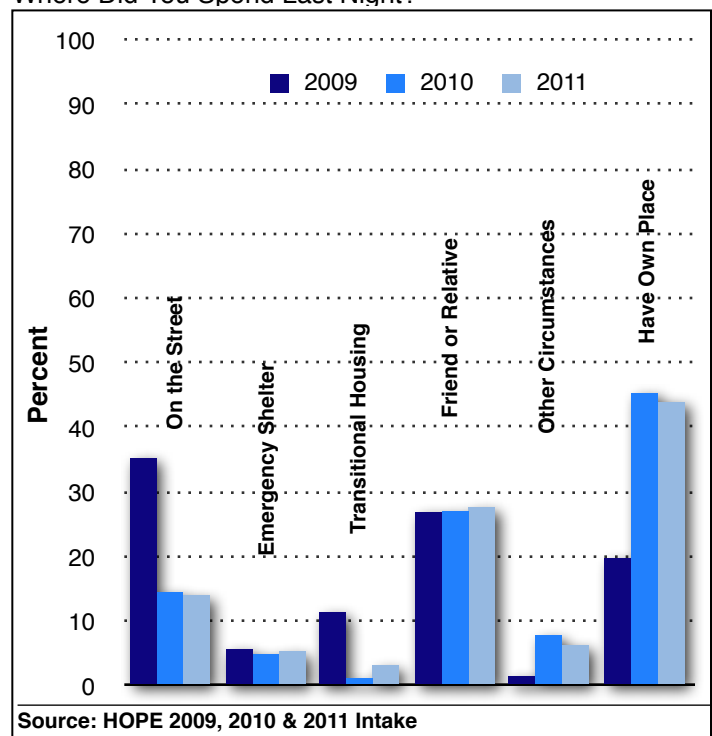
Who Participated and Where Are They Living?

On October 25, 2011 a one-stop service provision event took place in Fayetteville, AR. *HOPE 2011*, designed to serve those in need throughout the NWA region, was sponsored in partnership with the VA, United Way of NWA, 7Hills Homeless Center, and Central United Methodist Church. Besides services for veterans, a range of other services were provided to all participants including: blood pressure/glucose, BMI screenings, eye exams, dental screenings, haircuts, legal aid, massages, etc. A lunch was provided through Community Meals at Central United Methodist, and the majority of participants received a bag of donated groceries, and personal hygiene items provided by *3bags2days*.

Four-hundred and three persons attended this year's event-- **up by 295 percent** from last year. Similar to last year's event, there were more males (57.8%), whites (81.9%) homeless (56.1%), and non-veterans (75%) attending the HOPE 2011 event.

The housing status data found in Figure 1 shows some distinct differences between 2009 and the 2010/2011 attendees. In 2009, fewer than 20 percent had their own place but in 2010 and 2011 that number more than doubled (45%). In all years, the majority of attendees were homeless; fewer than 16 percent in 2010 and 2011 said they were staying on the street compared to more than one-third in 2009. The largest percentage of attendees (2010 and 2011) that reported being homeless were staying with a friend or relative (*invisible homeless*).

Figure 1. Current Housing Status
Where Did You Spend Last Night?



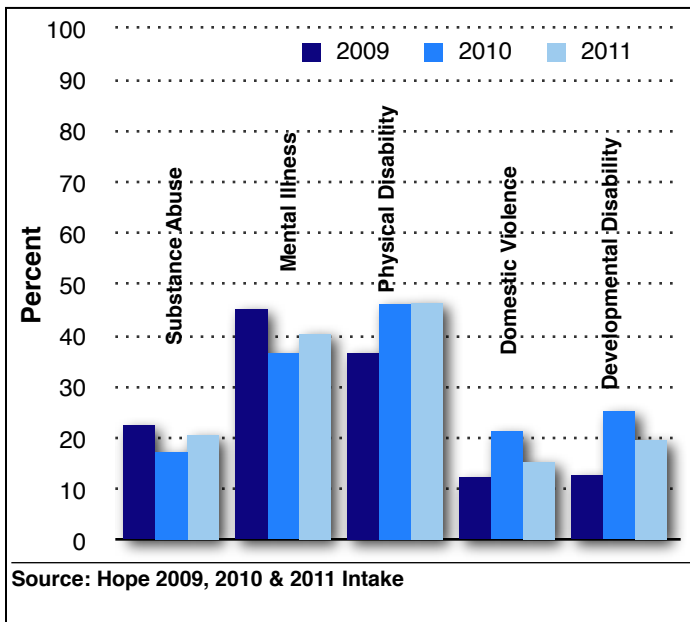
Of the **403** respondents attending in 2011, 68 percent reported being without their own home **at least once** in the past three years. That number was similar to the 2010 report. On average, persons reported being homeless 2 times in the last three years for an average of 12 months. While some persons reported being homeless for longer periods of time, episodic homelessness continues to characterize much of the homeless population in Northwest Arkansas and the United States. This finding of few episodes of shorter time spans mirrors the findings in the 2011 NWA point-in-time homeless census.

What Are Their Challenges and Needs?

The data in Figure 2 illustrate important differences between 2009-2011 attendees regarding chronic conditions. In 2011, there were slightly more persons reporting substance abuse and mental illness from the year before. In 2010, there were more persons reporting developmental disabilities and domestic violence victimization than in 2011. Finally, while most respondents reported at least one disabling condition (75%), more than 40 percent reported multiple conditions.

Though 75 percent of respondents reported some disabling condition, **nearly half** of those with chronic conditions said their condition remained **untreated**. This gap continues to be an important piece of the complicated service delivery puzzle.

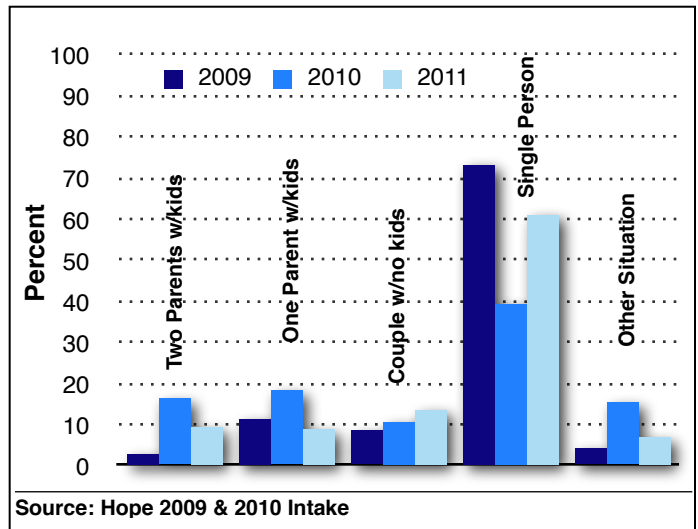
Figure 2. Self-Reported Disabling Conditions
Chronic Conditions



Family Composition and Status

The data in Figure 3 highlights some important differences between attendees regarding family status. In 2009, there were more single persons (73%-39%) attending than in 2010. That percentage went back up in 2011 (61%). In 2011, 18 percent of those in attendance had children. Overall, in all three years, the majority of parents reported having 1 or 2 children, but in 2011 nearly 30 percent of attendees who had children living with them said they had three or more. The family (children) composition of those attending was clearly different in 2011 than years past.

Figure 3. Family Composition and Status



Services Offered and Used

Clearly not everyone used all the services that were offered at the *Hope 2011* event. A large percentage of attendees used multiple services. A breakdown of usage is listed below in Figure 4. Seventy-one eye exams were given, 60 dental screenings, 89 persons were screened for blood pressure/glucose/BMI, 33 haircuts, and 250 received food and hygiene products. It is interesting that the most requested services were related to well-being or physical health/appearance. Future service provision events should continue to focus on health-related services particularly for a population where **57 percent reported having no health insurance**.

Figure 4. Services Used at HOPE 2011 n = 287

