



2018 RURAL HOMELESSNESS ESTIMATION PROJECT

Kainai First Nation
Community Report

May 2019



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The Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness
is available for download in English and French at www.ardn.ca

For more information about the 2018 Rural Homelessness Estimation Project



The Blood Tribe Family and Community Support Services (BT FCSS)' participation in the Rural Homelessness Estimation Project was made possible by the Calgary Homeless Foundation's (CHF) Innovation, Capacity building, & Enhancement (ICE) Grant.

The Alberta Rural Development Network recognizes that the 2018 Rural Homelessness Estimation Project took place on the traditional territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, and Treaty 8.

Kainai's Estimation Count occurred on Treaty 7 territory, the ancestral home of the Blackfoot Confederacy (comprising the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Stoney Nakoda (including the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), as well as the Métis. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous peoples whose footsteps have marked these territories for centuries. The ARDN also recognizes the direct connection between homelessness and colonization¹, and it is our hope that this project provides one small step towards righting wrongs.



PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES

The following communities participated in the 2018 Rural Homelessness Estimation Project:

Athabasca County
Banff and Canmore
Camrose
County of Grande Prairie
Drayton Valley
Drumheller
Fort Macleod
Grande Cache
Greenview
Hinton
Jasper
Kainai First Nation
Lacombe
Okotoks
Lac La Biche
Peace River
Ponoka
Strathmore
Tri-Region (Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Parkland County)
Wetaskiwin

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The following local organizations participated in Kainai Nation's Estimation Count:

Moses Lake Shelter
Blood Tribe Family and Community Support Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In partnership with the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA), the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) led a province-wide effort to estimate homelessness in rural communities in Alberta. Funded in part by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy, the Rural Homelessness Estimation Project (RHEP) is an initiative which facilitated homelessness data collection in 20 communities across rural Alberta over a three-month period in fall 2018. Kainai First Nation's Estimation Count was specifically funded by a partnership with Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF), through their Innovation, Capacity-building, & Enhancement (ICE) fund.

This initiative utilized the methodology outlined in ARDN's "Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness"² whereby surveys are administered at local and regional social service agencies to gather information on the following:

- Housing instability
- Employment
- Income
- Family demographics
- Services accessed

Lead project partners connected with local service agencies in their communities to coordinate the dates for their local count. Service agencies were instructed to invite individuals who visited their agency to fill out a 28-question survey during a consecutive 30-day period.

The participating 20 communities were provided with both an online and paper version of the survey. In either format, the survey could be completed directly by the respondent or with the assistance of a staff member.

Over the months prior to the collection period, service providers were trained on the objectives, needs, and overall goal of the project, which was to collect information on housing and service needs from individuals accessing local services. Emphasis during training was placed on clarifying survey terms, ensuring respondents' confidentiality and privacy, and securing their informed consent.

Data from paper surveys was input into the online platform by the local lead project coordinator and was compiled, reviewed, and consolidated by ARDN along with survey results collected online. Duplicates were removed (using the Unique Identifier, as per the Step-by-Step Guide methodology) and data analysis and integrity measures were performed by ARDN analysts to produce the final community findings outlined in this report.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This report consists of an overview of the primary data collected through social service agencies on Kainai First Nation from October 1-31, 2018. The lead coordinators for Kainai's Estimation Count were Moses Lake Shelter and Blood Tribe Family and Community Support Services (BT FCSS).

The primary data collected in Kainai's count indicated the following:

- 98 people felt their housing situation was unstable, that they could easily lose their housing, or were unsure whether their housing was stable;

- The majority of respondents who identified as housing-unstable were born in Canada (95%), identified as Indigenous (84%), and have always resided in Kainai First Nation (50%);
- 24% of respondents who were housing-unstable (n=97) were employed;
- The most common support services needed by all survey respondents (both stably and unstably housed) were "Basic Needs (food, shelter, medical, shower, laundry) support", "Financial Support", and "Health & Wellness Support".

As per the Step-by-Step Guide, this survey used the Canadian definition of homelessness as defined by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness³. However, to encourage client participation, the survey was advertised as a way to better understand the housing and support needs and challenges faced by community members in Kainai; use of the term "homelessness" was minimized due to the associated stigma, and the questions within the survey focused on respondents' "unstable housing" conditions. Unstable housing, as defined in this iteration of the project, is when a person experiences **"difficulty paying rent, spending a major portion of the household income on housing, having frequent moves, living in overcrowded conditions, or doubling up with friends and relatives"**. By re-framing the focus of the survey, this project attempted to decrease stigma, increase community members' willingness to participate, and collect quality data that stays true to the estimation's purpose.

It is important to reiterate that the aim of the project was not solely to identify the scope of homelessness and housing instability in Kainai, but to better understand the support services potentially required to address these issues. Through the collection of direct input from individuals who access social services, a baseline depiction of the local situation can be established.

Despite this, the following data is count data. While there is likely a small error in responses due to data entry or user error, there are no significance values, p-values, tests, or inferential statistics of any sort within this report. It is therefore not ARDN's intention with this report to:

- Guarantee that the data provides a complete or all-encompassing depiction of housing instability and service needs in Kainai;
- Provide any interpretations of the data contained herein;
- Make any recommendations for policy changes or actions to be taken in Kainai as a result of this data;
- Make any stake/claim about government policies, corporate actions, or externalities in Kainai;
- Make any inferences or generalizations about the population of Kainai.

It is the responsibility of the individual community and local community partners to draw their own conclusions and interpretations based on this data and determine how to best utilize it. ARDN assumes no responsibility or liability for any changes, decisions, or actions made as a result of the interpretation of data outlined in this report.

Due to rounding and exclusion of non-responses, data presented throughout this report may not add up precisely to the totals provided and percentages may not precisely reflect the absolute figures. Additionally, some questions from the survey are not included within this report due to low response rates. A copy of the actual paper survey used in this project can be found at www.ardn.ca/publications/2018-rhep-survey.

LIMITATIONS

In this pilot study, respondents self-identified as to whether they considered their housing situation as unstable or whether they felt they could easily lose their housing. Because of the stigma associated

with the term "homelessness" and the relativity of the term "housing instability", many individuals may not self-identify under either term, even though they meet the defined criteria. Therefore, individuals who may meet the Canadian definition of homelessness may have nevertheless reported their housing situation as stable (and vice versa).

Not every person who entered a participating service agency may have consented to the survey (and therefore, not every participating agency may have been able to gather completed surveys); not every individual requiring help may have entered a participating service agency during the 30-day collection period; and not every service agency in Kainai may have participated. As a result, this report presents a conservative picture of Kainai's situation with regards to homelessness, housing instability, and community service needs.

SUPPORT SERVICES

All individuals who took the survey (n=243), including those who said they had stable housing, were asked which issues they were seeking assistance for when they came into the service

Table 1: Respondents were asked "what general areas or issues are you here to get support with?"

General Support Services Needed (Multiple Responses Possible)	Responses
Prefer Not To Answer	155
Basic Needs (food, shelter, medical, shower, laundry) Support	63
Financial Support	52
Health & Wellness Support	45
Transportation Support	42
Family/Parenting Support	39
Support Services (access to government programs, access to technology)	36
Legal Support	30
Domestic Violence Support	25



agency. The support services that all respondents reported as needing the most can be seen in **Table 1** (below) and multiple responses were possible. 155 respondents chose "prefer not to answer".

The top three most common responses for support services required by survey respondents were "Basic Needs Support" (63), "Financial Support" (52), and "Health & Wellness Support" (45).

COMMUNITY FINDINGS

Housing Stability

The total number of respondents who completed the survey was 243. Of those, a total of 98 individuals answered "yes" or "not sure" to the question "Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or feel you could easily lose your housing?" and are therefore considered housing-unstable individuals (**Figure 1**). All the results that follow in this report include data solely from respondents who reported their housing situation to be unstable. This was done to both capture information from individuals facing homelessness, and better understand demand on local service agencies.

Reasons for Housing Instability

The reasons given for why individuals felt their housing was unstable can be seen in **Table 2**

243

TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS

98

UNSTABLY HOUSED RESPONDENTS

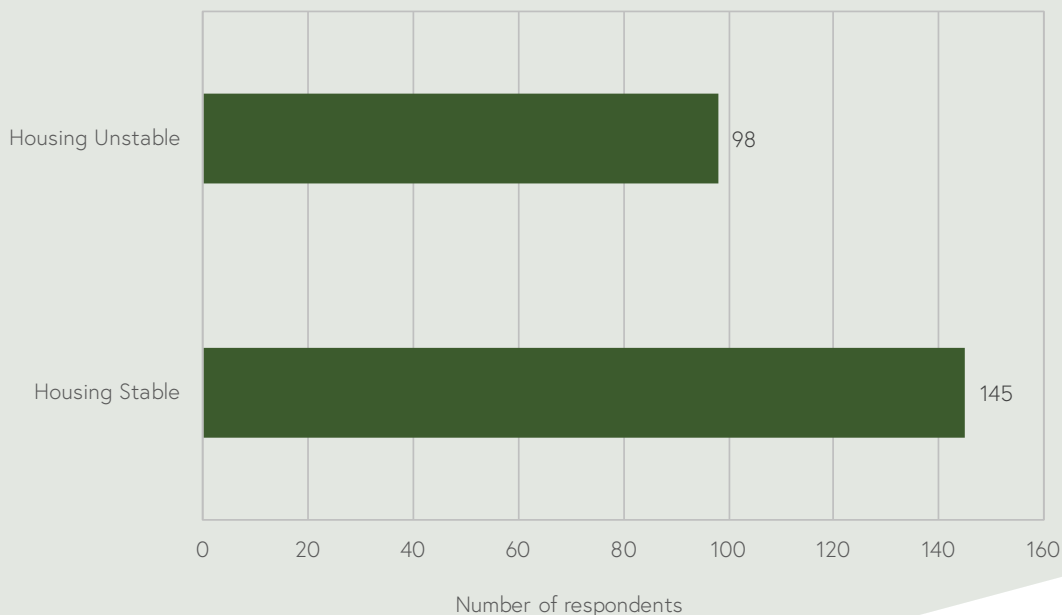


Figure 1: A total of 98 individuals answered "yes" or "not sure" to the question "Do you consider your housing situation to be unstable or feel you could easily lose your housing?" (n=243).

Table 2: The most common reasons provided by Kainai First Nation respondents as to why they felt their housing was unstable. Respondents were able to give more than one response. Other options that received zero responses are not shown.

Reasons for Unstable Housing Status (Multiple Responses Possible)	Responses
Inadequate Housing	49
Low Income	20
Other	13
Addiction/Substance Use	13
Conflict	11
Unable To Pay Rent/Mortgage	5
Job Loss	4
Illness/Medical Condition	4
Transportation	4
Abuse	1

(above). Respondents had the option to give multiple answers if necessary. The top five most common responses for why they felt their housing was unstable were as follows: 49 responses for "Inadequate Housing"; 20 for "Low Income"; 13 for "Addiction/Substance Abuse"; 11 for "Conflict"; and four each for "Illness/Medical Condition", and "Job Loss".

When respondents were asked to give their primary reason that they thought their housing was unstable (one reason only), the most common responses were: 38 (42.2%) for "Mental Health, Inadequate Housing, or Transportation", 11 (12.2%) for "Low Income", and eight (8.9%) for "Addiction/Substance Use".

Note: Due to a formatting error in the paper survey, the options "Mental Health", "Inadequate Housing", and "Transportation" were listed together as a single option for the question "of the reasons previously stated, what is the main reason for being homeless or at-risk for losing your home". As a result, the aforementioned options cannot be reported on definitively.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender

The reported gender identities of housing-unstable individuals can be seen in **Figure 2**. 44 (44.9%) identified as men, 52 (53.1%) identified as women,

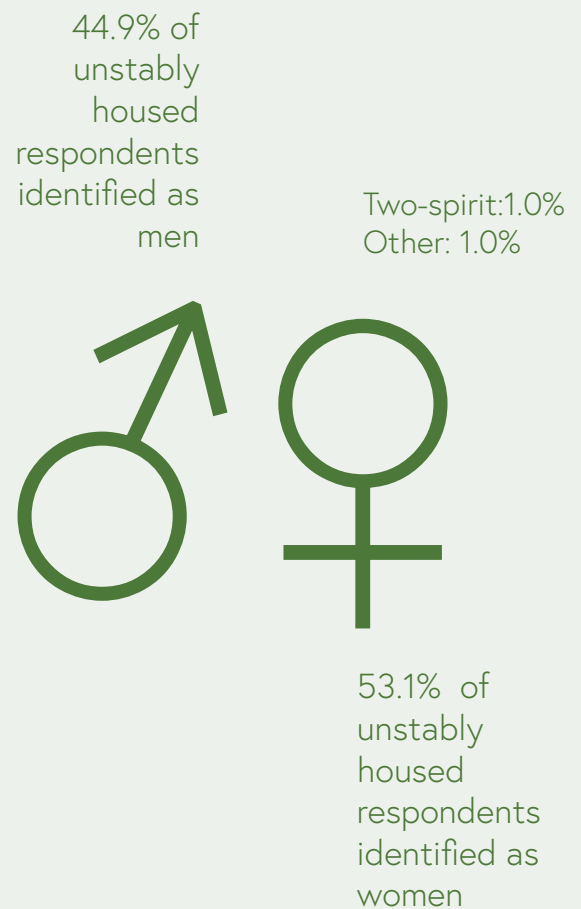


Figure 2: Gender identities of housing-unstable respondents (n=98).

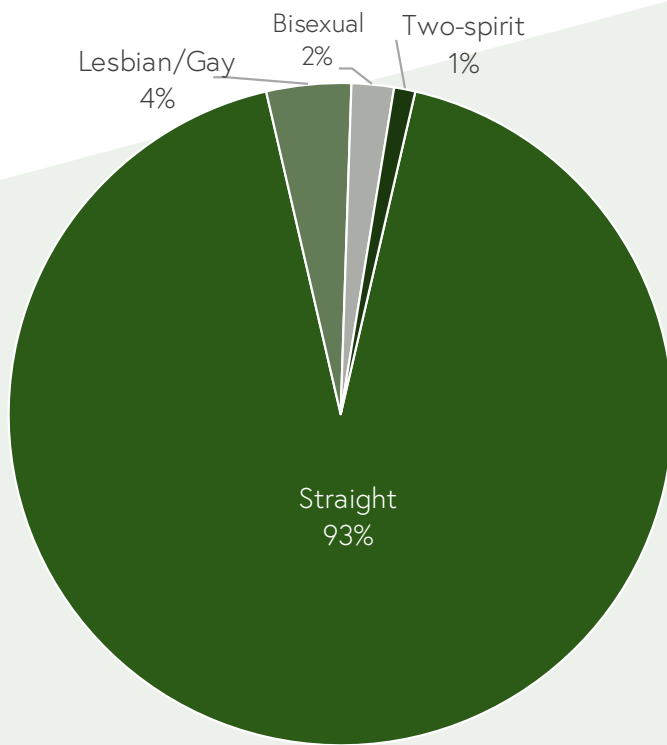


Figure 3: Sexual orientation of respondents who identified as housing-unstable (n=97).

one (1.0%) identified as two-spirit, and one (1.0%) responded with "Other".

Sexual Orientation

The reported sexual orientations of respondents can be seen in **Figure 3** (page 9). Of the survey respondents, 90 identified as straight, four identified as lesbian or gay, two identified as bisexual, one as two-spirit, and one gave no response.

Age of Respondents

The age demographics of respondents with unstable housing can be seen in **Figure 4** (below). The average age of individuals facing unstable housing was 38 and the median age was 39.

A note about youth participation: service agencies were instructed to limit survey administration to individuals 14 years of age or older, as per the consent and confidentiality guidelines of the Alberta College of Social Workers⁴.

Migration Status and Ethnicity

Out of all housing-unstable respondents, 93 were born in Canada, two were not born in Canada, and

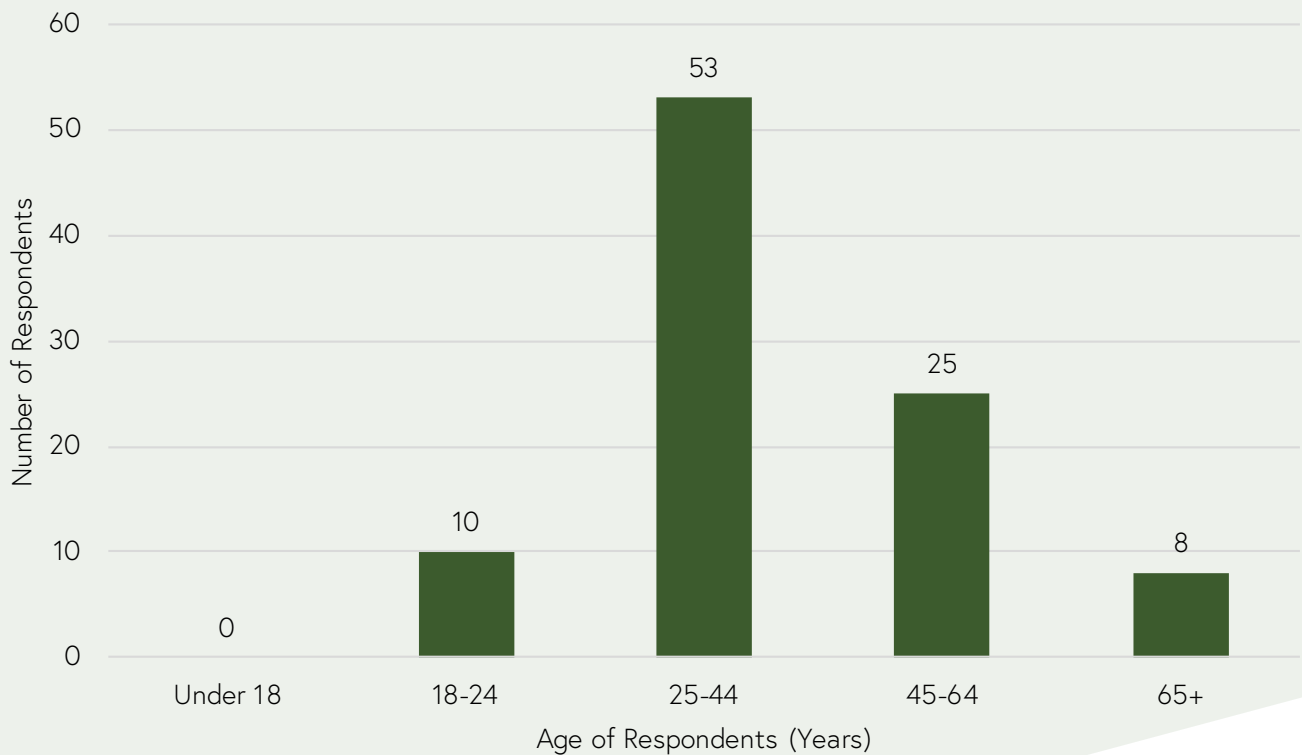


Figure 4: Age demographics of housing-unstable respondents (n=96).

three responded "Prefer Not to Answer". These results are shown in **Figure 5** (below).

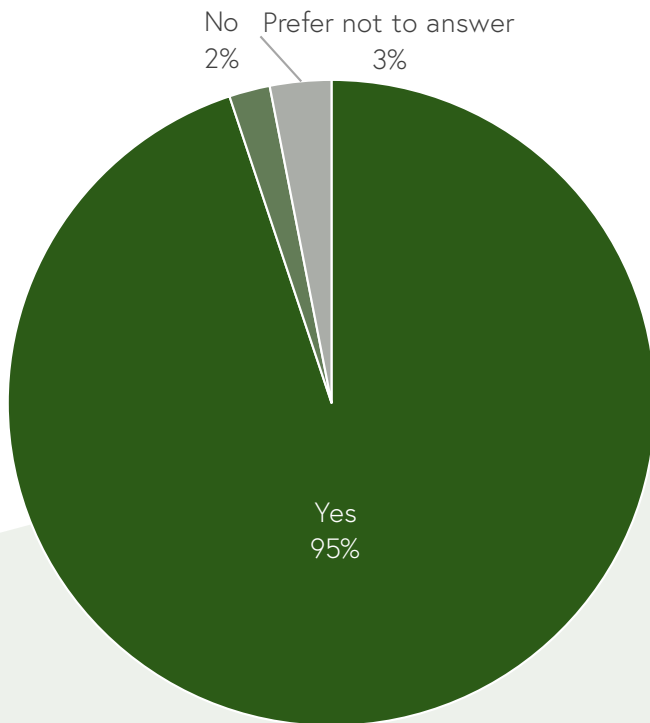


Figure 5 (above): Unstably-housed respondents who answered "yes" or "no" to the question "were you born in Canada"? (n=98).

Of those respondents who were born in Canada, 76 as Indigenous (all First Nations), two gave no response, and 15 selected "Prefer Not to Answer" (**Figure 6**, bottom-left).

Respondents were asked immigration-related questions, but due to lack of respondents (n=0), this dataset was not reported on.

Of respondents currently facing unstable housing, 93 were Canadian citizens and five individuals gave no response.

RECENT LIVING SITUATION

Duration of residency

The duration of time that respondents had lived in the community can be seen in **Figure 7** (page 11). 49 respondents reported that they have always lived in the community, 43 respondents had lived in the community for more than a year, and six respondents have lived in the community for less than a year.

Table 3: Respondents were asked about their accommodations within the past week.

Accommodations in the past week (multiple responses possible)	Responses
Apartment/House	65
Someone Else's Place	18
Shelter Services	11
Prefer Not To Answer	9
Abandoned Building	1

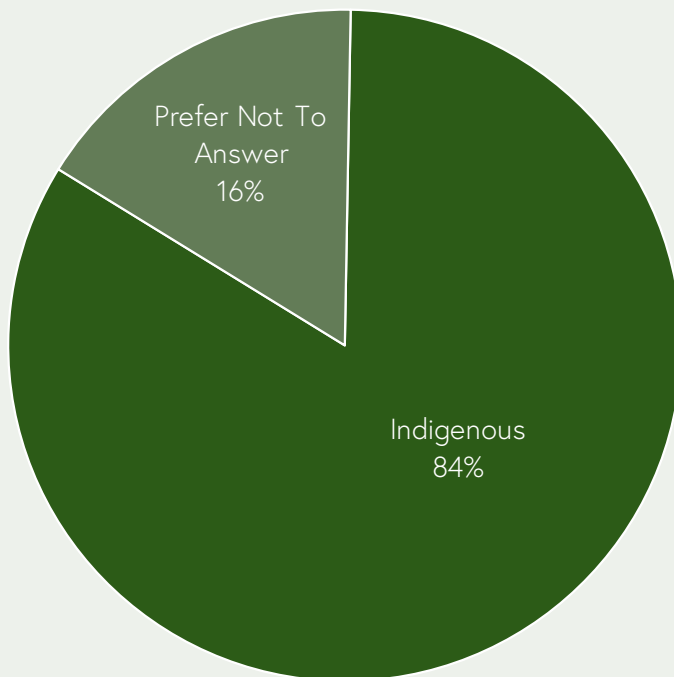


Figure 6 (above): Of respondents born in Canada, 84% identified as Indigenous and 16% responded with "prefer not to answer" (n=91).

Accommodations

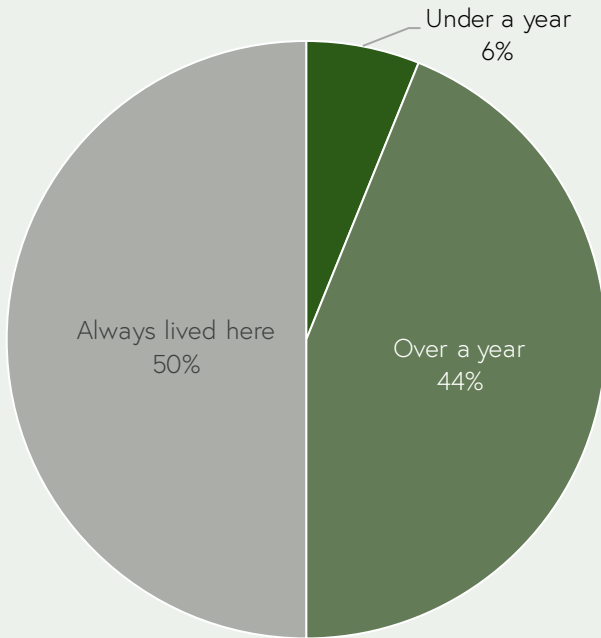
Respondents were asked about their most recent living situations. Respondents' most commonly reported living situations for the week prior to taking the survey can be seen in **Table 3** (above). The duration of time that respondents reported living in their current living situation can be seen in **Figure 8** (page 11).

Respondents were asked about the number of times they had moved in the past year; frequent moves can

be an indicator of instability and insecurity. Twenty-nine respondents have not moved in the past year. Of respondents who had moved in the past year, 11 had moved 1-2 times, three had moved 3-5 times, one had moved 6-10 times, two had moved 10 or more times,

45 responded "Not Applicable", two responded "Prefer Not to Answer", and five gave no response.

If respondents had lived somewhere else in the past year, six moved from another residence within the community, six from another community in Alberta, one from another country, and one responded with "Prefer Not to Answer"



Who's Staying with You

Some respondents reported that they had other people sharing their living situation with them. Of collected housing-unstable survey responses (n=98), there were a total of 257 adults staying with the respondents. The average number of adults sharing unstably housed respondents' living situation was 3.38. There were also a total of 183 children staying with the respondents. The average number of children sharing unstably housed respondents' living situation was 2.73.

It is important to note that these individuals cannot be confirmed to be experiencing housing instability, and these numbers are just an indication that they share the same living situation or household as the survey respondent.

Figure 7: Respondents were asked about their current living situations. The figure above contains the response for the question "how long have you lived within this community?" (n=98).

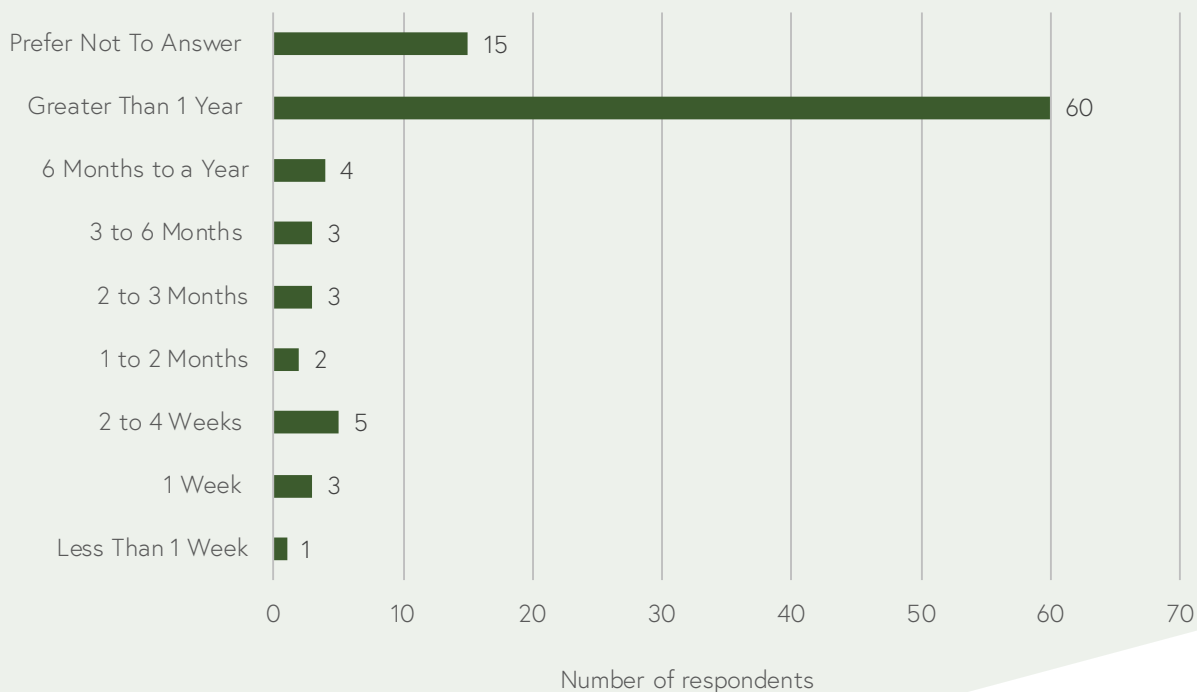


Figure 8: Respondents were asked how long they have been staying in their current accommodations. (n=96)

Eleven unstably-housed respondents answered "yes" to the question "are you or anyone in your household pregnant?".

Shelter Use

Finally, respondents were asked if they had spent time in an emergency shelter in the past year. 97 individuals responded to this question, and 32 answered "yes" to accessing shelter services in the

past year. Subsequently, if they had answered "no", respondents were asked about possible reasons for not utilizing emergency shelter(s). One said there were no shelters in their area, 14 said shelters were not needed, and 12 selected "Prefer Not to Answer". The remainder provided no response.

Note: due to a technical error, the shelter use question was not included on the online version of the survey (for all 20 communities that took part in the survey); therefore, data was only collected for respondents who filled out the paper version of the survey. As a result, this question was asked of a smaller subset of housing-unstable survey respondents and the data is therefore incomplete.

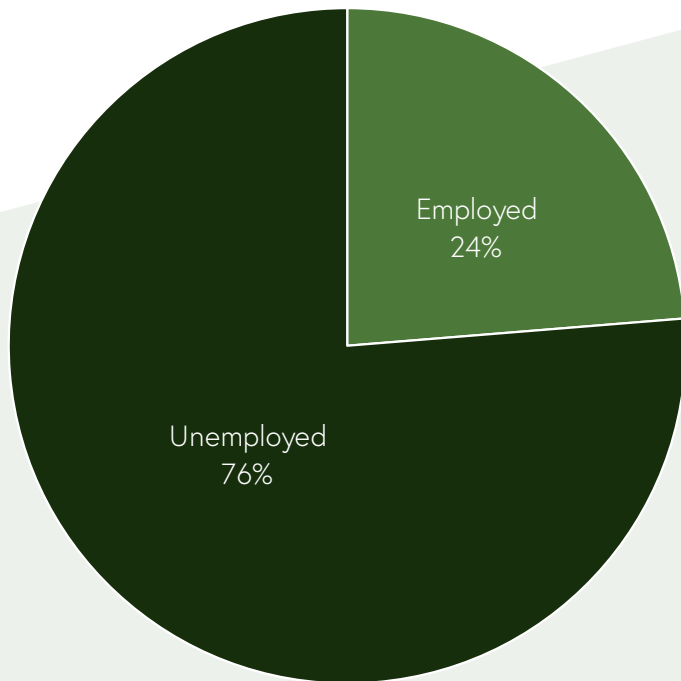


Figure 9 (above): Respondents were asked whether they're currently employed (n=97).

EMPLOYMENT

The employment status of housing-unstable individuals can be seen in Figure 9. Out of 97 individuals who responded to the question, 23 were employed and 74 were unemployed. For those who were employed, nine were employed full-time, two were employed part-time, one was a casual worker, and 12 responded "Prefer Not to Answer". The sector that people were currently employed in can be seen in **Table 4** (below).

Table 4: Respondents who reported being employed were asked which sector they were employed in.

Current Employment Sector	Responses
Education Sector	1
Human Services Sector	1
Finance Sector	1



Military or Emergency Services

Respondents were asked whether they had ever served in the Canadian military or any emergency services. Thirteen respondents reported that they had either been employed by the Canadian military or in an emergency service position (RCMP/police, EMS/paramedics, or firefighters). Of these, three respondents had been in the military at some point (either active duty or veterans), while seven currently or previously worked in emergency services, one worked in both, and two respondents chose "Prefer Not to Answer".

Sources of Income

Finally, respondents were asked to identify what sources of income they had, with multiple responses if applicable. The top responses for the community can be seen in **Table 5** (below).

Table 5: Respondents were asked to identify their current sources of income.

Sources of Income (Multiple Responses Possible)	Responses
Employment	20
Student Funding	18
Social Enterprise	17
Non Senior Related Benefits: Alberta Supports Benefits	15
Other Sources	6
No Source of Income	5
Prefer Not To Answer	5
Non Senior Related Benefits: Child Tax Credit	4
Money From Family/Friends	2
Non Senior Related Benefits: AISH	1
Non Senior Related Benefits: Learners Benefit	1

UNIQUE FINDINGS

We compared Kainai First Nation's data to the overall data from the other 19 communities that participated in the Rural Homelessness Estimation Project. This section describes unique data findings that are outliers in comparison to other communities. All findings in this section are based only on housing-unstable respondents (n=98). Percentages are rounded to the nearest tenth.

The Kainai First Nation ranked highest out of all the communities in the following areas: women who've always lived in the community (56.0%); men who reported more than four children staying with them (11.9%); men who served at some point in either the Canadian military or any emergency services (23.8%); and men who were visiting service agencies for support with domestic violence (14.3% of male respondents). It also had a relatively high proportion of women reporting inadequate housing as at least one reason for their housing instability (48.0%).

Finally, Kainai ranked highest amongst the communities for both men (19.1%) and women (20.0%) reporting Student Funding as at least one source of income, as well as highly for both men (11.9%) and women (20.0%) reporting Social Enterprise as at least one source of income.

CONCLUSION

The 2018 Rural Homelessness Estimation Project was a pilot project aimed at investigating rural and remote homelessness in 20 rural communities across Alberta. It represents the first coordinated effort to quantitatively estimate homelessness outside the seven major cities across the province. It's intent was to provide baseline data for further investigation into the issue of rural and remote homelessness in Alberta.

This report provides a summary of primary data collected by service agencies in Kainai First Nation from October 1 - 31, 2018. It is a snapshot of the living situation of individuals who accessed services in the community and reported that they were experiencing housing instability.

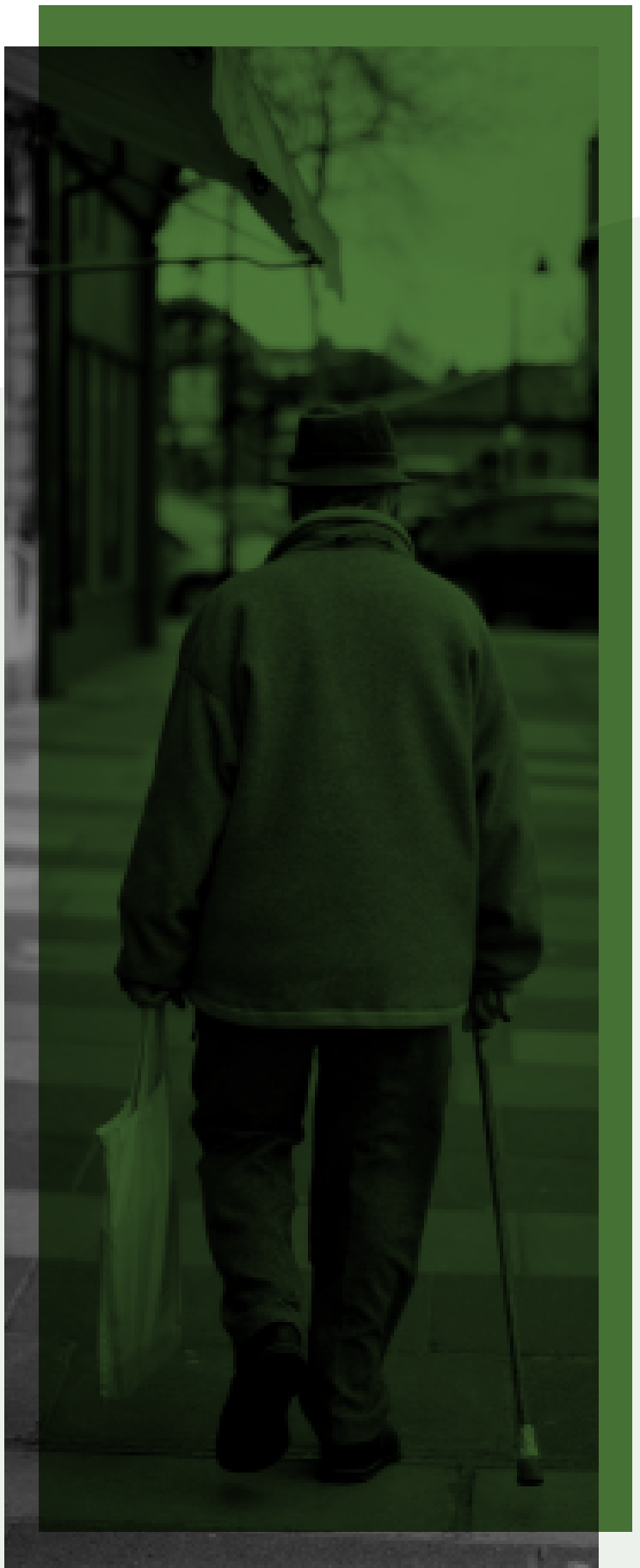
From a total of 243 survey respondents, 98 people

reported that they felt that they could easily lose their housing or that they were uncertain whether their housing situation was stable. Given the reasons outlined at the beginning of this report, there are likely more individuals who met the Canadian definition of homelessness or who are struggling with housing instability and homelessness in Kainai.

It is important to reiterate that the information herein is intended to be presented as objectively as possible, without interpretation or recommendations from the ARDN. The intention of this report is to provide means for agencies within the community – who are most familiar with their local needs and realities – to determine their community's potential needs, as well as what concrete responses or additional research may be necessary to prevent or reduce homelessness and housing instability in Kainai.

What has been made clear from the study is that rural and remote housing instability and homelessness exists in all 20 rural communities that were investigated, a finding that supports previous qualitative research indicating that it is widespread across Alberta⁵. More research on rural and remote homelessness, in both Kainai First Nation and across the province, is warranted to better understand the issues unique to individual municipalities and areas, as well as commonalities shared, in order to inform best practices and local solutions. Given that it was the first such count of its kind in Alberta (as well as the first large-scale utilization of the methodology described in the Step-by-Step Guide to Estimating Rural Homelessness), many lessons were learned and the results from this pilot study will help shape and improve future counts.

The Alberta Rural Development Network would like to thank Moses Lake Shelter and Blood Tribe Family and Community Support Services and all community members in Kainai First Nation for their work on this pilot study, as well as the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) for their work coordinating the project.



ENDNOTES

1) Thistle, J. (2017). *Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

2) Abedin, Z. (2017). *Step-by-Step Guide to Estimate Rural Homelessness* (1st ed.). Retrieved from <https://www.ardn.ca/estimation-guide/step-by-step-guide-to-estimate-rural-homelessness-english>

3) Gaetz, S.; Barr, C.; Friesen, A.; Harris, B.; Hill, C.; Kovacs-Burns, K.; Pauly, B.; Pearce, B.; Turner, A.; Marsolais, A. (2012). *Canadian Definition of Homelessness*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

4) Alberta College of Social Workers. (2015). *Guidelines on the Management of Consent and Confidentiality When Working with Minors*. Retrieved from http://acsw.in1touch.org/uploaded/web/NEWS_GUIDELINES_ConsentwithMinors.pdf

5) Schiff, J. W.; Schiff, R.; Turner, A. (2016). *Rural Homelessness in Western Canada: Lessons Learned from Diverse Communities*. *Social Inclusion*. (4)4, 73-85. doi: 10.17645/si.v4i4.633





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