Homeless Count & Survey Training
Purpose of the Count

- Census of persons experiencing homelessness in Tarrant and Parker County
- Measure occupancy rates of available shelter and transitional housing programs
- Measure trends in homelessness
- Quantify the needs and experiences of persons experiencing the homeless
- Federal requirement for our Fort Worth/Arlington/Tarrant Area Continuum of Care (Tarrant and Parker County)
- Definitive data set for all federal programs and funding for homeless programs (HUD, VA, HHS, DOJ, etc.)
What we are going to measure on January, 24, 2013

• **Conduct Count** of homeless persons
  – Unsheltered - *Volunteers*
  – Emergency Shelters - HMIS
  – Transitional Housing/Safehaven Programs – HMIS

• **Survey** homeless persons
  – Unsheltered – *Volunteers*
  – Emergency Shelters – *Staff*
  – Transitional Housing/Safehaven – *Staff*

• **Occupancy rates/Unmet need of Housing**
  – Compare the number of persons who are homeless with the available housing in the community
Why JANUARY? It’s COLD!

- Federal regulations require a point in time count to be conducted the last 10 days of January
- Nearly ALL Texas Continuums of Care are counting on January 24
  - **Cold**: more folks indoors, easier to count
  - **End of month**: folks run out of monthly checks
  - **Night**: spending the night in a place not meant for human habitation is part of the definition
Thursday, January 24, 2013

Counting Volunteers Report 8:00 pm
Volunteers Deploy to Routes 9:30 pm

Return to deployment area when route complete
11:30, midnight ... 2 a.m.
Count Night Logistics

CENTRAL STAGING AREA

University Christian Church Fellowship Hall
2720 S. University Dr.
Fort Worth, TX 76109
UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL.
2720 S. University Dr  Fort Worth TX 76109
Count Night Logistics

ARLINGTON STAGING AREA

Arlington Human Services Building
400 W. Sanford
Arlington, Texas
Count Night Logistics

NE TARRANT COUNTY STAGING AREA

Community Enrichment Center
6250 NE Loop 820
North Richland Hills, TX
COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT CENTER
6250 NE Loop 820, North Richland Hills, TX
**Do NOT use your GPS as it will try to take you across the bridge that is out.**

NE Loop 820 take the Rufe Snow exit. Turn South and go by QT. First light after QT is Meadowlakes Dr. Take a right and follow Meadowlakes around to CEC on your left.

Signs out front will direct you to the door to go in.
WEATHERFORD STAGING AREA

Starbucks Parking Lot
1952 South Main Street
Weatherford, TX

* Will deploy as soon as all volunteers arrive due to no Emergency Shelter.
Staging Area Assignment

CENTRAL FW 300+ persons
70+ routes

ARLINGTON 35 Volunteers
12 routes

NE TARRANT
10 routes 40 Volunteers

WEATHERFORD
4 routes 15 Volunteers
Staging Area Assignment

• Counting volunteers gather at 8:00 pm

• Volunteers will Check-In

• FW: Tier 1 and Tier 2 Routes will be matched with Police Officers
  
  Tier 1: 1 Team: 1 officer
  Tier 2: 2 Teams: 1 officer (contiguous routes)

• Tier 3 and 4: No officer – less urban areas

• Deploy to assigned routes by 9:30 pm

• Return to Staging Area with Results
Staging Area Assignment

• RETURN ALL MATERIALS THAT NIGHT to staging area

• VOLUNTEERS are to bring back the results…not the Police Officers

• RETURN EVEN if you find NO homeless! We need to also know where homeless are NOT in the community.
Count Kit Includes:

• Instructions and Emergency phone numbers

• MAPs of your assigned route for TEAM and OFFICER

• Survey Forms
  (use a SEPARATE survey for EVERY adult, even if same family)

• HOMELESS COUNT signs for vehicle

• Pocket Pals and other info cards
Geographic Distribution

Tarrant County and Weatherford have been divided into counting routes the majority of which are in Fort Worth where more than 80% of homeless reside.

GIS Maps have been produced that will be clearly labeled with the perimeters of routes outlined.

Areas known for homeless encampments will be identified notes on your maps.

GO TO SAMPLE MAP
DEFINED:
A homeless person is someone who will be spending the night in a place not meant for human habitation such as a car, sidewalk, abandoned building, under bridges.

Persons who present themselves as homeless, such as:

- Carrying all belongings
- Asleep outside or in a vehicle
- Inhabiting a tent or makeshift structure, or underpass
**REMEMBER: You are walking into their ‘home’**

- Don’t shine flashlights in eyes, light your path so you can see them, and they can see you.
- Persons who are homeless and on the streets or in camp sites are often wary of strangers approaching them unexpectedly. Be sure they understand your intent in approaching.
- Be courteous in your interactions as you would with anyone, but be firm in your response to any inappropriate questions or requests.
- If they DO NOT want to participate, Thank them (take the COUNT) and move on.
Introducing Yourself and Your Purpose:

• “Hello, We are volunteers for the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition and we are conducting a count and survey of the homeless. My name is Cindy, may we approach?”

• Explain participation in the survey is ANONYMOUS. “We do not need to know your name, we just want to get some important information that will help the community get more funds for services for the homeless”
If there are two or more adults who describe themselves as a family or couple, COMPLETE A SEPERATE FORM FOR EACH ADULT, and make a notation on each of the two forms “SAME HOUSEHOLD” and fold the two surveys together when complete.

This could be extended families, siblings or a couple.
IF birth date is 1989 or sooner (persons aged 24 or younger) use the UN-Y Youth Survey.

“Transitional youth” is a special sub-population of considerable new focus by HUD.
Let’s walk through the survey.

Unsheltered 2013 PIT Survey

Unsheltered Youth 2013 Survey
CHILDREN WITH PARENTS ON THE STREET.

If there are young children with the individual, record child information on the parent’s count form.

When complete the survey, call the STAGING AREA MANAGER and we will make an effort to get them into one of the family emergency shelters.

DO NOT TRANSPORT ANYONE
MINOR YOUTH AND RUNAWAYS

If you encounter under age (less than 18) children on the street, DO NOT LEAVE THEM. DO NOT TRANSPORT THEM.

Have the police officer assist and call the STAGING AREA MANAGER to dispatch someone to take the youth to the Emergency Youth Shelter.

COMPLETE THE YOUTH COUNT FORM while you are waiting for assistance.
Suspected MINOR YOUTH AND RUNAWAYS

If the young person says they are 18 or older, but you are very concerned that they are truly younger, GIVE THEM THE YOUTH SHELTER CARD and let them know that if they might need shelter, that the resource is available.

Call the STAGING MANAGER and we will ask the Youth Outreach team to check out the situation.
The Count and Survey

- Survey will take approximately 10 minutes

- Tasks:
  - One person interview and record survey data
  - One person assist with flash light
  - Third and fourth person should maintain an awareness of the surroundings
  - Eye on your vehicle
RECAP:

• Survey and count *all willing* unsheltered homeless

• Count and capture demographic profile of *all* unsheltered homeless

• Record the best address or location ADDRESS, INTERSECTION, LANDMARK

• Assure that responses will be anonymous

• Allow respondent to decline certain questions
Good judgment is your best friend. If your judgment tells you not to approach a person or put yourself in a situation, then don’t.

Stick with your other team members
All team members in ONE car!

When stop vehicle: use hazard blinkers

Don’t guess: 9-1-1 and know WHERE you are: Address, Intersection, Landmark
Tools and Preparation

CLOTHING:

- Wear weather-appropriate outdoor clothing.
- Wear BRIGHT colors visible at night.
- Shoes: comfortable and suitable for off-road walking.
Tools and Preparation

THINGS TO BRING:

- Flashlights – two or more
- Clipboard
- Pens
- Cell phones (charge them up!)

PLEASE: Do not take photos with your cell phone or cameras of persons being interviewed. Respect their privacy.
REMINDERS:

- Arrive at staging area no later than 8:00 pm (or 6:00 for the same-night training if you recruit MORE volunteers!)
- Check-In Team – *Sign Waiver Form*
- Review Survey Kit
- FW TEAM CAPTAIN Meet Police Officer if assigned
- FW Exchange Cell phone numbers with officer/team
- Tape Signs to rear and side windows of vehicle
- Decide on deployment plan and go!
- Drive each street of your assigned area
- Walk sidewalks, parks, and **safe** areas
- Conduct surveys, tabulate counts
- Return ALL materials to staging areas THAT NIGHT
THURSDAY
JANUARY 24, 2013
RAIN OR SHINE OR SNOW!!

IF there is a MAJOR ICE event, we count the next night, January 25, 2013 and ALL will be notified via email and every social network outlook we can find!

www.AHomeWithHope.org
Homeless Count

ANY questions

Email / text

cjcrain@ahomewithhope.org

817-991-9127