

# Minnesota's Reservation Homelessness Study

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Michelle Decker Gerrard, Study Co-Director

Wilder Research



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Here for good.

# A few things to discuss...



- Overview of Minnesota's Statewide and Reservation Studies
- Reservation study implementation process
- A snapshot of Reservation Study Results (2012)
- How study data is used




# Overview of Minnesota's Statewide and Reservation Homeless studies

# A brief history of the homeless survey in MN

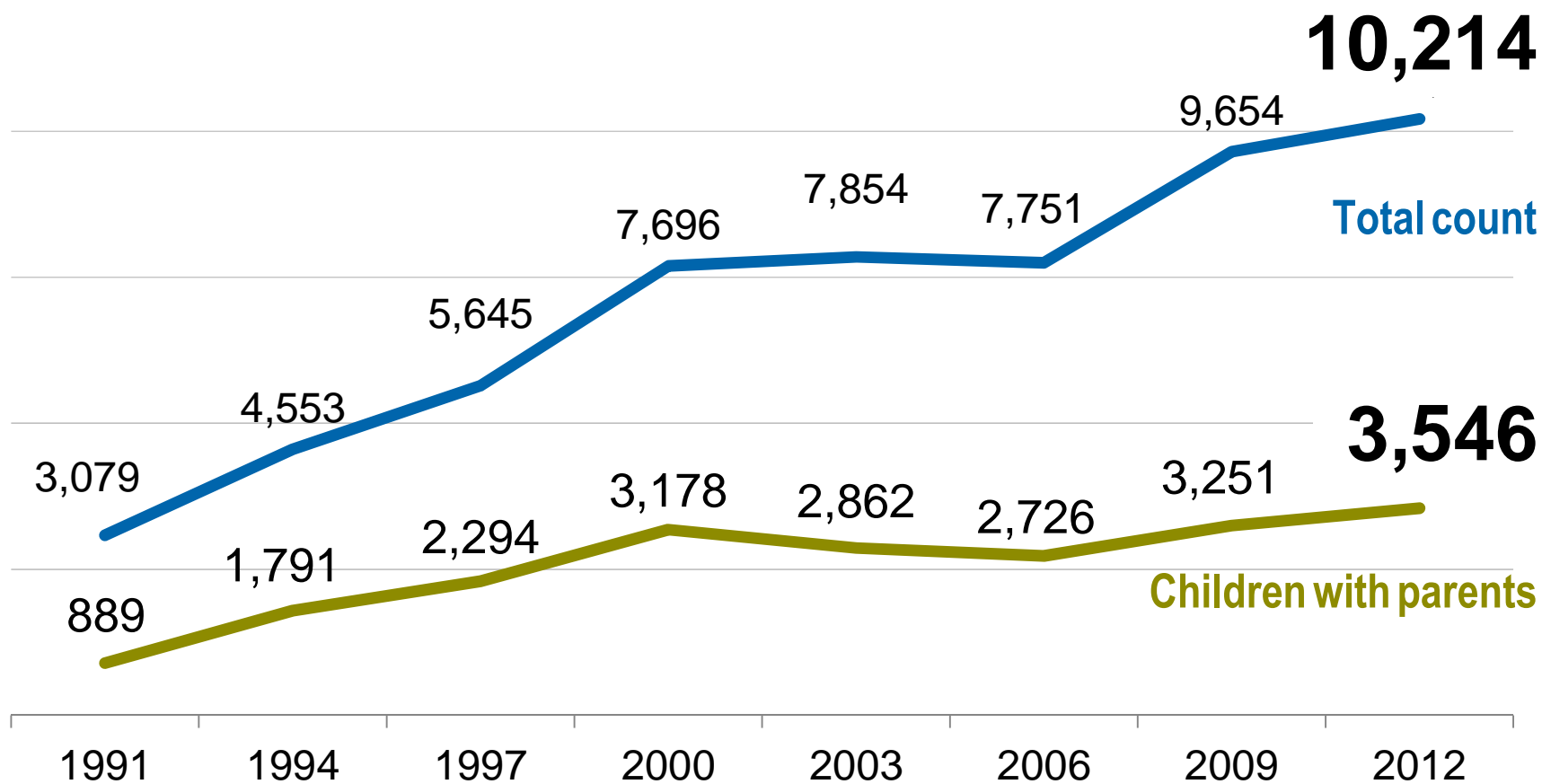


- Statewide study has been conducted every three years since 1991
- Trained volunteer interviewers

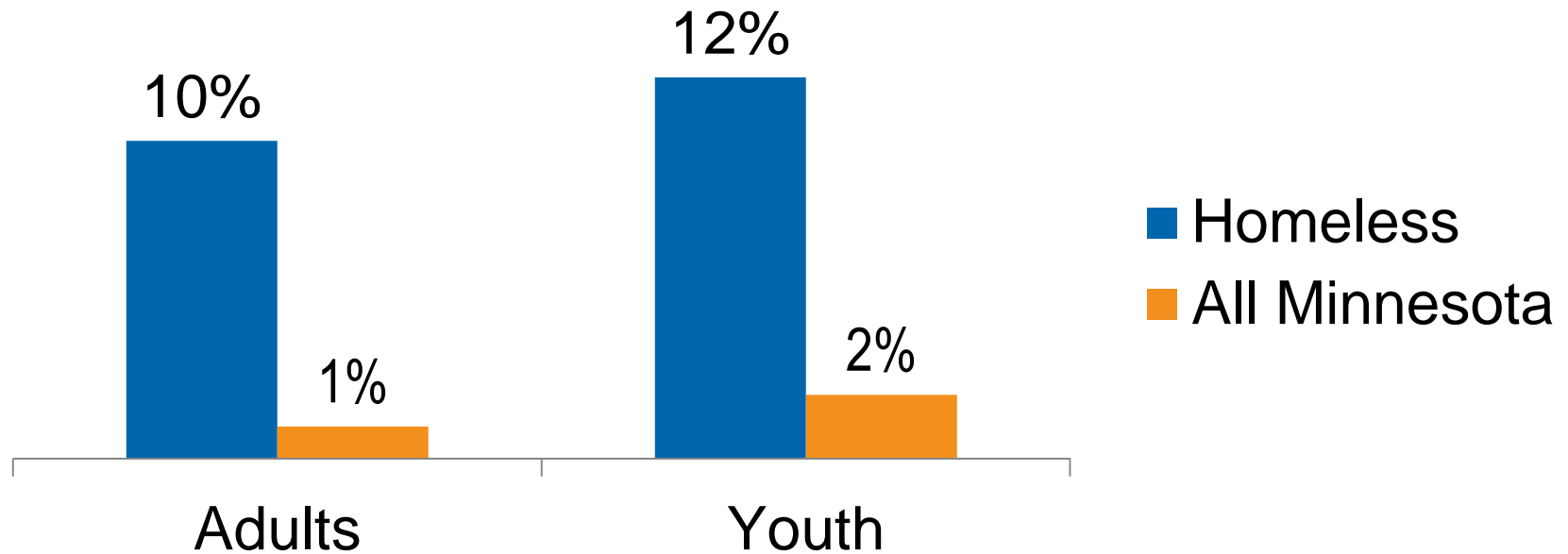
## **Last conducted on October 22, 2015:**

- 45 minute interviews in 300 shelters and programs
  - Outreach locations in 50+ cities, towns, and outlying areas
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# One-night study counts



# American Indians are overrepresented among the homeless population



**Notes:** Homeless youth are age 21 and under; All Minnesota youth are age 10-24

# Reservation Study implementation process

# Reservation study implementation



- Reservation study conducted in 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015
- Interview modified based on feedback from tribes (added doubled up and over crowding components)
- Funded by Minnesota Departments of Human Services, Housing, & other state agencies, CSH, private funders, and Wilder Foundation (at no cost to participating Tribes)





# Reservation study implementation



- Six reservations across the state
- Respect tribal sovereignty
  - Can opt out of questions
  - Tribes determine who, where, when, & stipend
  - Tribes own their own data, only report aggregate
- Counts those who are “doubled up” with others
- Unique policy implications due to land ownership

# Reservation study implementation



- Extensive outreach to tribes: phone calls, ITV, attendance at Tribal Housing Directors meetings
- Champions in State Government, including
  - Alicia Smith, Indian Policy Specialist, Office of Indian Policy, Minnesota Department of Human Services  
([alicia.smith@state.mn.us](mailto:alicia.smith@state.mn.us))
- Tribal Council Resolutions for each major decision step (brought by Tribal Housing Directors and other champions)
- Dialogue and shared successes build trust

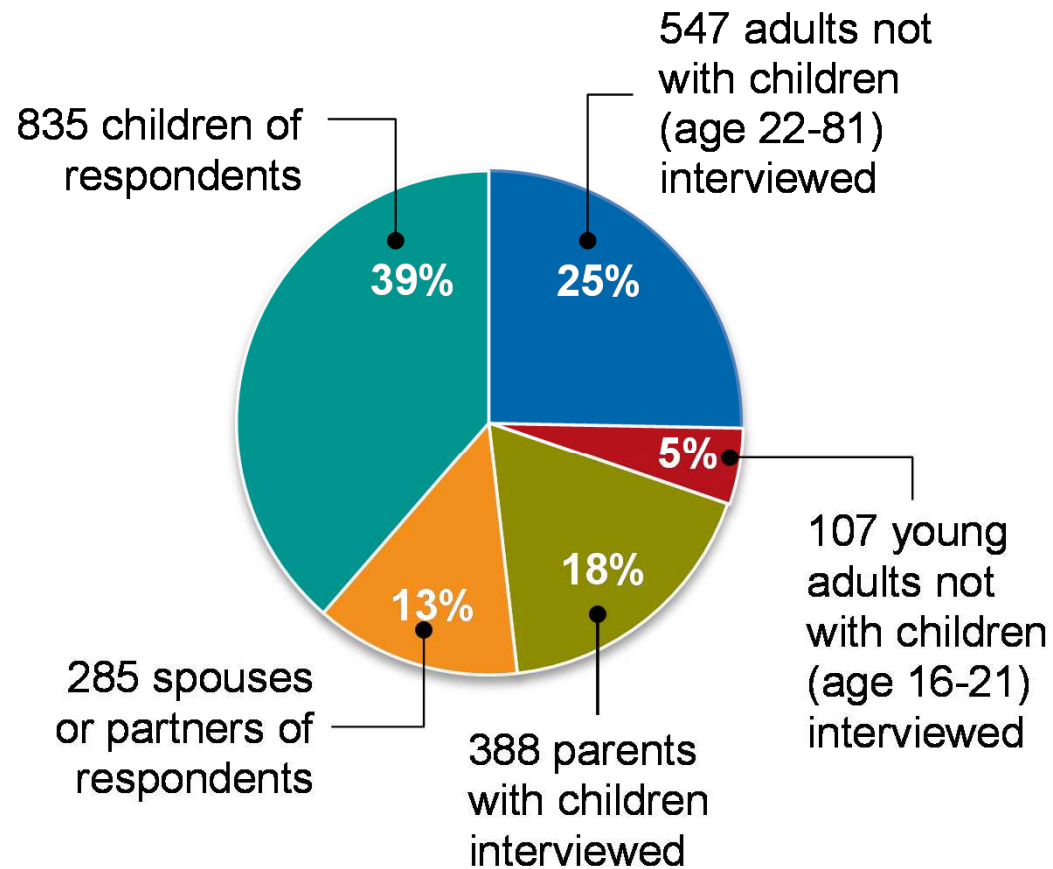
# Snapshot of Reservation Study Results (2012)

2015 coming soon. . .

2,162

the number of people  
who were counted as homeless in the  
2012 reservation homeless study (272  
met the federal definition)

# 2,162 homeless in total



# Key findings

*Overcrowding has steadily increased since 2006*

*Children represent 39% of the homeless population on reservations*

*30% were employed; 21% of young adults 19-21 were employed*

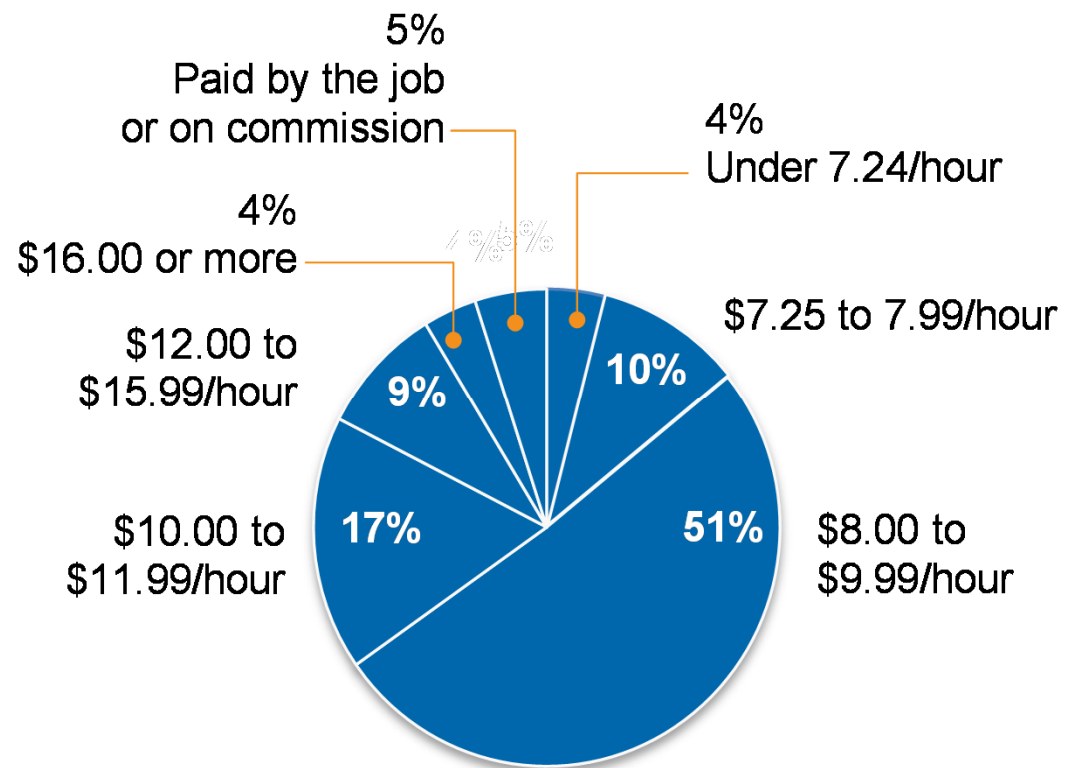
*One-third of respondents have not received a high school diploma or GED*

*29% of the homeless population is impacted by mental illness*

*Transportation was listed as the primary barrier to employment and health care*

# Employment

- 30 percent employed
  - Half work full-time
  - Half earn between \$8 and \$10 an hour



# Unemployment



- 70% were unemployed
  - 58% unemployed over one year
  - 40% unemployed over two years
- Top barriers to employment
  - Transportation, 50%
  - Physical health, 18%





# Job assistance



- During October 2012,
  - 7% of the unemployed received job training
  - 16% of the unemployed received help to find a job
- 15% of unemployed said lack of resources to find a job was significant barrier to employment
  - Third most commonly cited barrier to employment, after transportation and physical health



# Young adults, 19-21



- 21% of young adults employed
  - 31% of adults 22+
- 52% of young adults lack a high school diploma or GED
  - 28% of adults 22+
- Less likely to utilize SNAP and medical benefits




# Mental health problems



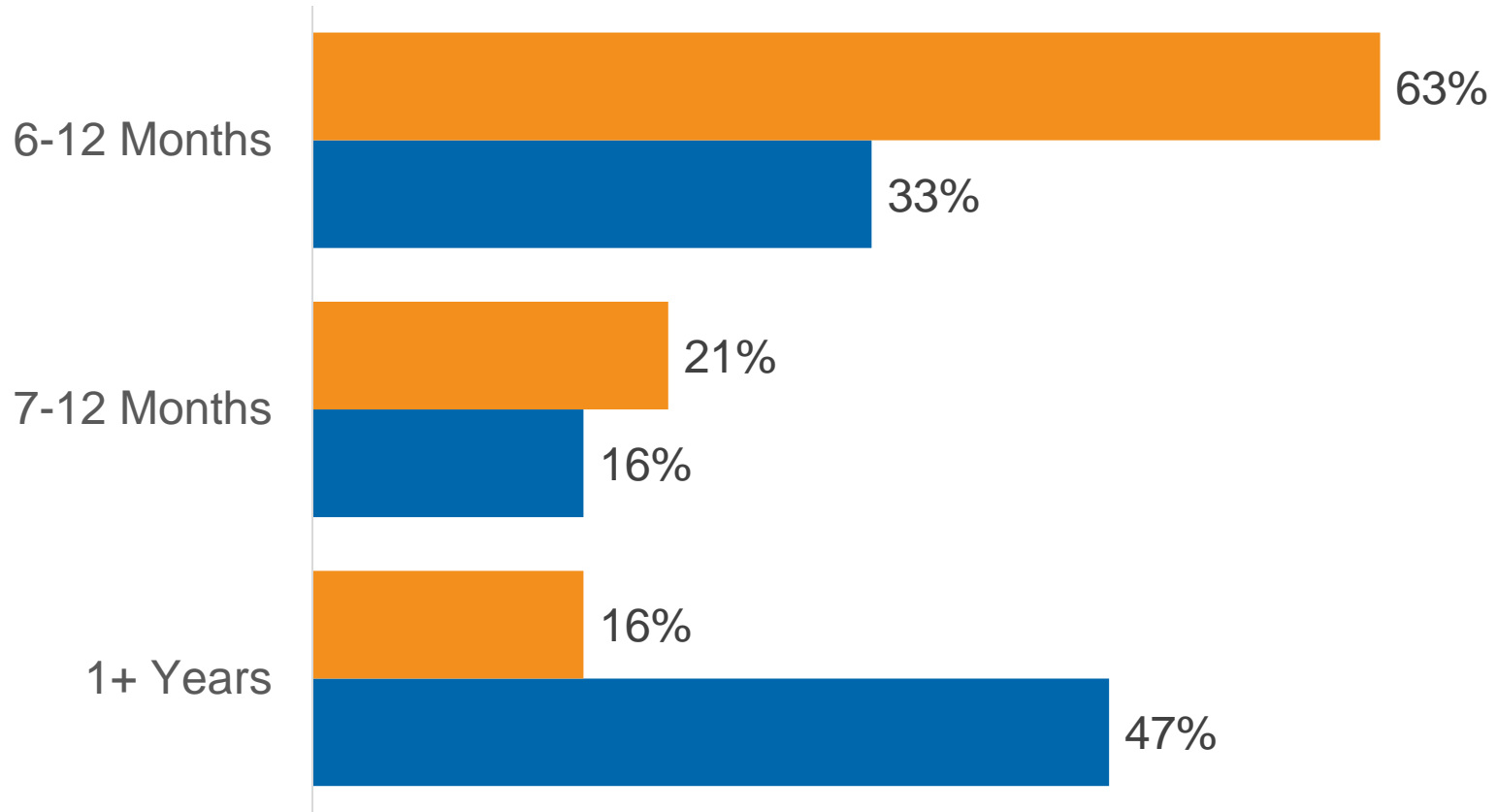
- 29% diagnosed with a significant mental illness
  - 38% had suffered a traumatic brain injury
  - 25% also had a diagnosed substance abuse disorder
  - 25% not taking prescribed medications
- In general, higher rates of service and public assistance utilization
  - 18% used a free mental health clinic in October

# High-risk population: Mentally ill



- Were more likely to suffer abuse while homeless
    - 20% had been beaten while homeless, compared to only 4% of those who were not mentally ill
  - More likely to have a history of abuse
    - 38% stayed in an abusive situation to maintain housing (13%)
    - 32% physically mistreated as a child (10%)
    - 24% sexually mistreated as a child (6%)
    - 27% neglected as a child (13%)
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# Waiting list for housing support

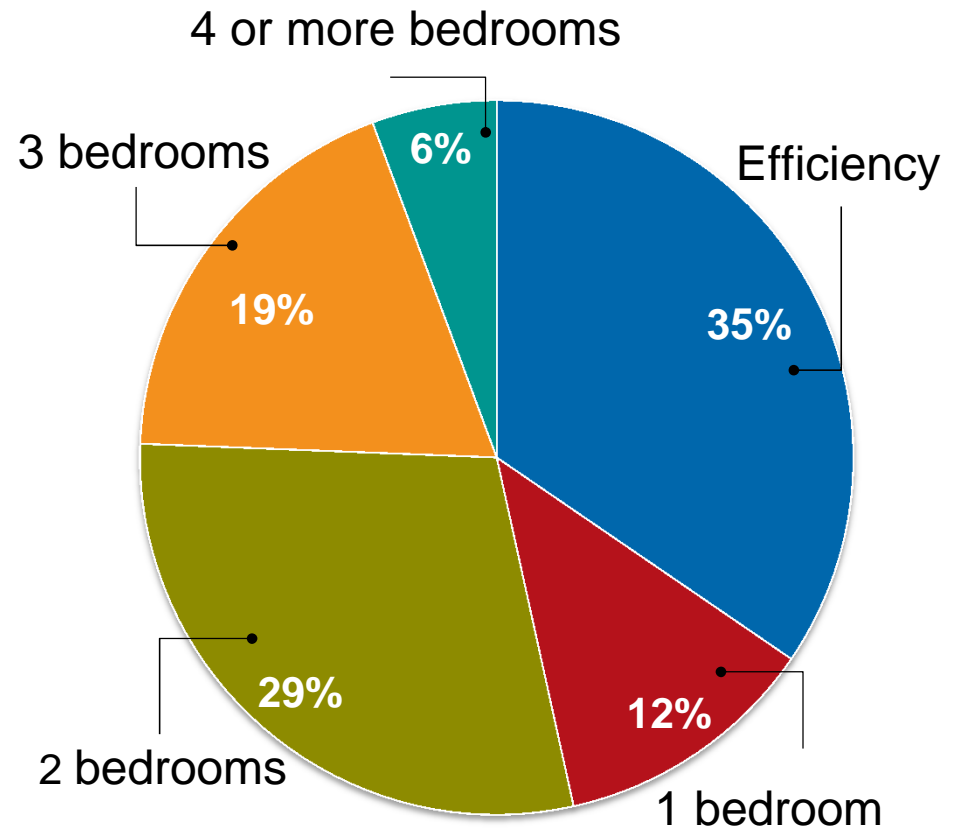


- Homeless in Greater Minnesota
- Homeless and near-homeless on reservations




# Housing needs

- Modest housing needs
- Willing to pay \$250 per month (median)
- 19 percent could pay nothing



# Doubling up



- Long-term
    - Two-thirds had been homeless 1+ years, including
    - 17 percent for 5+ years
  - Unstable
    - 55 percent moved 2+ times in past 60 days
    - 22 percent slept in a location not suitable for housing
  - Crowded
    - 74 percent living in overcrowded spaces, including
    - 55 percent in severely overcrowded spaces
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# How study data is used



**\$30  
million**

the approximate dollar amount  
that was leveraged using the 2006  
Reservation Homeless Survey data

# Fond du Lac



# Fond du Lac



# How have tribes used the study data?



- Understand homeless populations living on tribal land
- Provide better services, and target services to address the most pressing needs
- Seek grants and other funding
- Developed plans to end homelessness
- Unintended consequence of increasing awareness of those who are volunteer interviewers for the study (tribal and State staff)



# Statewide: Used to inform policy



- Service utilization
- Access to benefits
- Barriers to services
- Housing needs



To learn more about homelessness  
in Minnesota go to  
[www.wilderresearch.org](http://www.wilderresearch.org)

Contact: [michelle.gerrard@wilder.org](mailto:michelle.gerrard@wilder.org)  
or [nicole.martinrogers@wilder.org](mailto:nicole.martinrogers@wilder.org)