



HAVEN FOR HOPE, SAN ANTONIO
&
HOPE FOR SACRAMENTO
2/2021

FACT SHEET: **HOPELESSLY WRONG FOR SACRAMENTO**

**INSTEAD....SACRAMENTO NEEDS AN INTEGRATED –
PUBLIC HEALTH & BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM OF CARE THAT TREATS
OUR UNHOUSED NEIGHBORS WITH DIGNITY BASED ON HOUSING FIRST,
HARM-REDUCTION , TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE,
EVIDENCED-BASED PRINCIPLES***

BACKGROUND: As part of the City’s Master Homeless Plan for Siting, Financing and Operating Housing Solutions, the City Council is considering a “large, service-rich campus to shelter people experiencing homelessness in the city and county and help them move into permanent housing.” One model that has received considerable attention and study in Sacramento is Haven for Hope in San Antonio. Hope for Sacramento claims to be a “chapter” of Haven for Hope.

The February 2020 report *Integrating Care for People Experiencing Homelessness: A Focus on Sacramento*, authored by the UC Davis Center for Healthcare Policy and Research and the Division of Social Work, CA State University, Sacramento summarizes 13 “exemplary” organizations, including Haven for Hope, that offer at least one with comprehensive services co-located on a campus and 6 “innovative, scattered-site models.”

In order to make the most informed choice of the best fit of these models and approaches for Sacramento, the Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness thought it was important to fact check the claims of both Haven for Hope and Hope for Sacramento, since they are receiving considerable attention.

HAVEN FOR HOPE

www.havenforhope.org

CLAIM: “Downtown Point In Time Count has been reduced 77% from 1/2010 – 1/2020”

FACT CHECK 1: According to the Haven for Hope website somewhere between 600 – 800 people experiencing homelessness sleep outside in the Courtyard nightly – so, of course, the Downtown Point In Time Count has gone down 77% over 10 years – since they are now in the Courtyard – out of sight and out of mind

* See UC Davis/CSUS report, *Integrating Care for People Experiencing Homelessness for a number of evidenced-based practices along these principles*: <https://health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/policy/publications/downloads/Integrated-Care-for-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-FINAL.pdf>

FACT CHECK 2: As Figure 1 and Figure 2 below indicate, drawing on the San Antonio Continuum of Care [CoC] Point In Time Count from 2010 [founding of Haven for Hope] – 2019 – the number and percentage of unsheltered and total number of people experiencing homelessness in the San Antonio CoC has remained relatively the same.

**Figure 1: Number Unsheltered & Total Homeless
San Antonio CoC: 2010 – 2019**

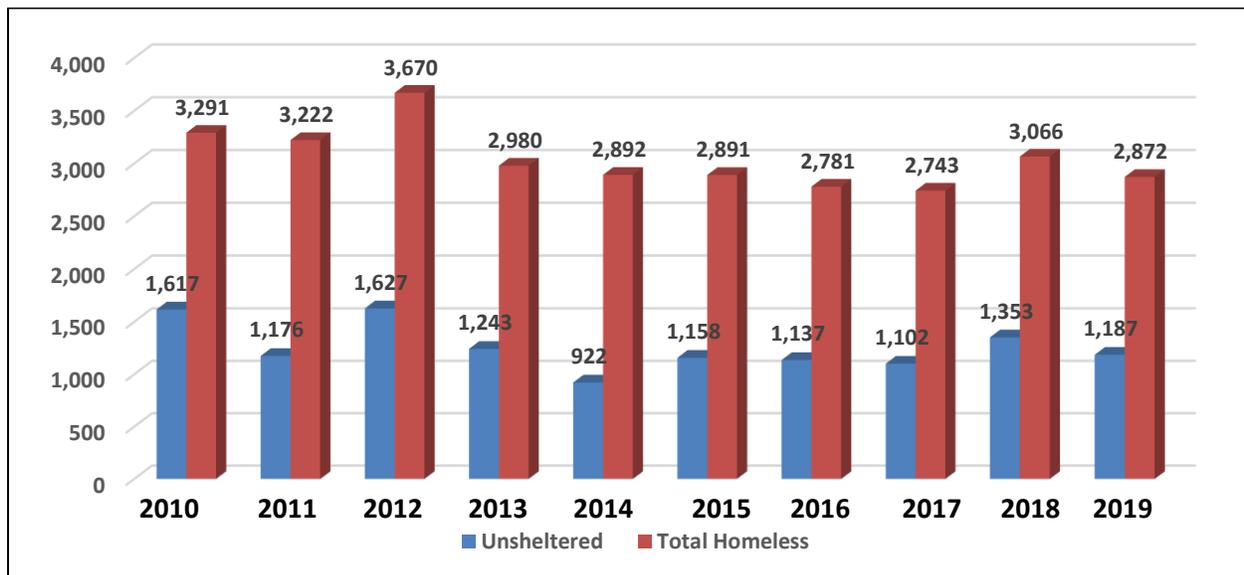
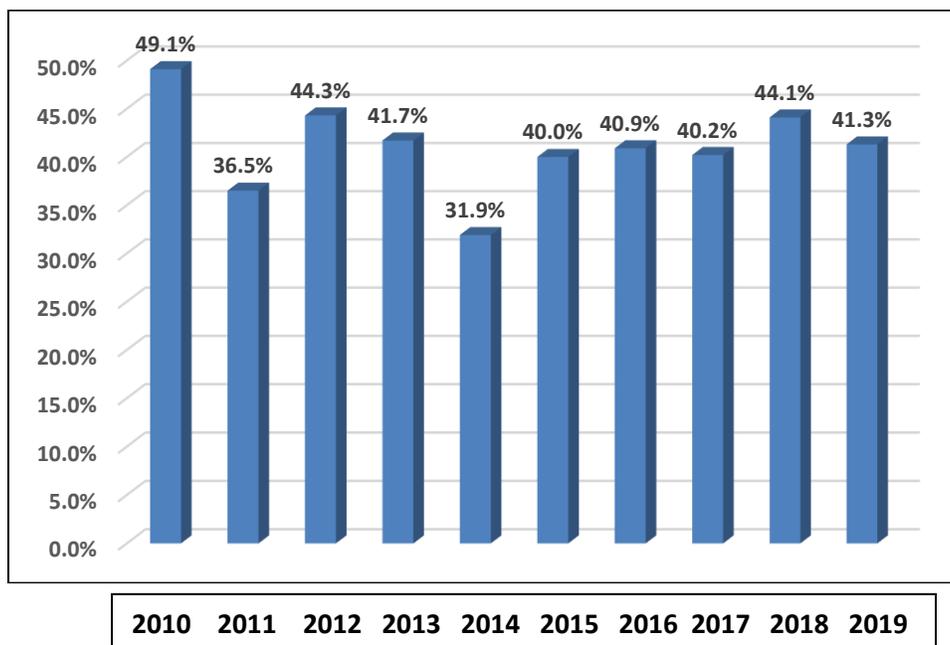


Figure 2: % Unsheltered: San Antonio CoC: 2010 - 2019



HOPE FOR SACRAMENTO
www.hopeforsacramento.org

1. CLAIM: *“Housing First is a controversial theory that holds that the key to getting change is to first house the homeless without first addressing Mental Health or Addiction issues... Housing First is effectively Housing ONLY, also known as warehousing.”*

FACT CHECK:

Housing First is a national best practice embraced by the federal government and codified in CA in 2016 by SB1380

- United States Interagency Council on Homelessness [USICH] – 2018: “deploy housing first systemwide”
- 2016 - the California Legislature passed Senate Bill 1380 (Mitchell). It required all housing programs to adopt the Housing First model. Codified as California Welfare & Institutions Code § 8255.

Hope for Sacramento misrepresents the findings of the nine academic studies referenced in the National Institute’s For Health’s National Library of Medicine – each study in fact supports the Housing First Approach:

“Housing first has been shown to promote positive outcomes for this population”

“Housing First is an established intervention for people experiencing homelessness and mental illness”

“Housing First approaches successfully improved the housing stability and may improve some aspects of health”

“Housing First did not have any effect on changes to recovery scores – overall- it strengthened social networks and community involvement by providing case management that will facilitate mental health recovery”

2. CLAIM: Hope for Sacramento states that the city’s claim that the chronically homeless are all from the area where they are sleeping is *“improbable”*- *“since this viewpoint also ignores the dumping of primarily mentally ill patients in California through a program sometimes known as “Greyhound Therapy”*.

FACT CHECK: According to the 2019 Sacramento Point in Time Count, 93% of people experiencing homelessness interviewed said they were from the Sacramento area.

3. CLAIM: *Create sufficient bed space to allow enforcement of no camping laws*

FACT CHECK:

Sufficient Bed Space: According to the federal 9th Circuit court ruling in the Martin v Boise case, “as long as there is no option of sleeping indoors, the government cannot criminalize indigent, homeless people for sleeping outdoors, on public property, on the false premise they has a choice in the matter.

Thus, “sufficient space” is not as Hope for Sacramento has calculated is 2,000 – 3,000 beds but rather about 11,200 [according to Sacramento Steps Forward, there are about 11,200 people experiencing homelessness on an annual basis.]

Criminalization of people experiencing homelessness: Eight years ago the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness published, *Searching Out Solutions, Constructive Alternatives to the Criminalization of Homelessness*, arguing that communities “cannot arrest their way out of homelessness” and should pursue more cost effective ways to address homelessness in their community.

4. CLAIM: Homeless people are a threat to themselves or others. “Violence Risk: Most people with mental illness, even untreated mental illness, are not a threat to themselves or others, but a disproportionately high portion are. This is particularly true when untreated mental illness is combined with substance abuse.... 90% are addicted primarily to meth or cocaine.... City plans to place people who are a danger to themselves or others... one block from the State Capitol. Anyone remember Squeaky Fromme?”

FACT CHECK:

Mental Health & Substance Use Issues:

- According to the SSF 2019 *Point In Time Count*: 59% of the total of 5,570 or 3,286 people were identified as “chronically homeless”;
 - ✓ Of these – 26% identified cognitive or physical disabilities;
 - ✓ 21% identified severed psychiatric condition [most commonly depression or schizophrenia];
 - ✓ 9% state that the use of alcohol/drugs prevented them from keeping a job or stable housing
- According to the City’s August 2019 *Railroad Shelter Program Report*, of the 658 unduplicated people experiencing homelessness who used the shelter:
 - ✓ 60% [394 people] identified a mental health issue;
 - ✓ 46% [[302 people] identified a substance use issue

Violence Towards People Experiencing Homelessness:

- According to the SRCEH’s 2020 *Homeless Deaths Report*, the leading cause of death in Sacramento County among the 138 homeless deaths in 2019 was substance abuse [43%] followed by violent deaths [33%] – gun shots; stabbing; drowning and hangings];
- According to the 2016 report by the National Coalition for the Homeless, *No Safe Street: A survey of Violence Committed Against Homeless People* – over the last 17 years, at least 1,657 people experiencing homelessness have been the victims of violence perpetrated for the sole reason that they were unhoused at the time. This includes 428 men and women who lost their live for being homeless.

In case you don’t remember Squeaky Fromme: A member of the Manson Family, a cult led by Charles Manson. She is best known for attempting to assassinate President Ford in 1975, for which she served 34 years in prison. She was paroled in August, 2009.

CONCLUSION:

**AFTER CHECKING THE FACTS, HAVEN FOR HOPE AND HOPE FOR SACRAMENTO ARE
HOPELESSLY WRONG FOR SACRAMENTO**

**WE DON’T NEED TO WAREHOUSE 1,600 – 2,000 HOMELESS PEOPLE/NIGHT SO WE CAN
TURNAROUND AND CRIMINALIZE THE OTHER 9,000**

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