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ABSTRACT

An evaluation was conducted of the Arkansas adult education for homeless persons program funded through the Stewart B. McKinney Act. Evaluation activities included the following: a review of program applications; onsite inspection of the classrooms and materials for the homeless; observation of class activities; and interviews with program directors, shelter and agency administrators, program instructors, classroom aides, and a sample of participants from programs operating during the evaluation period. Evaluation results included the following: (1) adult education for homeless persons projects provide a variety of education services through a diversified and appropriate delivery system; (2) homeless adults recognize their needs and are very much interested in becoming better trained, educated, and employed; (3) adult education programs need to be extended to provide education for life; (4) conventional quality achievement measurements may not be appropriate for evaluation of projects for the homeless; (5) project personnel are dedicated and competent; and (6) positive community relationships between homeless and residential populations may be enhanced by education for the homeless programs as evidenced by staff interactions with other resource and service providers. Recommendations were made to develop lessons for students who attend only a few hours or a few sessions, for recruiting strategies planned to maximize networking opportunities, for complete monthly reports submitted to the state adult education office, and for student progress assessment and recording periodically during the project period. (The report contains profiles of successful practices, such as sign puzzles, success building, and community networking, and an appendix includes evaluation questionnaires). (KC)

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# ADULT EDUCATION HOMELESS PROJECT 1991

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AN EVALUATION OF THE ARKANSAS  
ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS PROJECT

Prepared for  
The Vocational and Technical Education Division  
Adult Education Section

Conducted by  
Educational Research and Services  
Arkansas State University  
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This study was greatly facilitated by the cooperation of Ms. Camille Lide, Special Projects Coordinator and her staff. The evaluation staff is grateful for the hospitality and friendliness shown them during site visits. Each administrator/coordinator was most accommodating in scheduling LEA program visits. Instructors were honest, forthright and helpful in providing information and assistance. We extend our thanks and appreciation for their contributions to this report.

## BACKGROUND

The office of Educational Research and Services, College of Education at Arkansas State University submitted a formal application (bid) in response to the request for proposals to evaluate the Arkansas Adult Homeless Education Project on April 5, 1990.

The purpose of the proposal was to provide an unbiased external evaluation of the Arkansas Adult Education Homeless Project funded through the Stewart B. McKinney Act. The intent of the evaluation proposal was to present a design whereby sites would be visited, curriculum would be identified and reviewed, and management records and procedures would be inspected. The results of the evaluation would serve to provide data and information to funding agencies and related supervisors regarding effective procedures for providing adult education to the homeless.

The scope of the project was the entire state of Arkansas. The state Special Projects Coordinator's office as well as each site was visited for data collection and observation. Written and phone communication were conducted with the state coordinator and each LEA project director. Evaluation questions and procedures are included in the appendix of this report.

As defined by the Adult Education Section, the terms "homeless" or "homeless adult" refer to an individual lacking a fixed, regular and adequate night-time residence, as well as, an individual having a night-time residence that is:

- A) a supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
- B) an institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
- C) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

The term "homeless" or "homeless adult" does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an act of Congress or state law.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Through the RFP process, the office of Educational Research and Services at Arkansas State University was contracted to conduct an evaluation of the adult education for the homeless program. The evaluation consisted of reviewing the effectiveness of programs and identifying successful practices established by the programs. The following procedural activities were used to determine

program effectiveness: a review of program applications; on-site inspection of the homeless classroom and materials; observation of during-class activities (when appropriate); and interviews with program directors, shelter and agency administrators, program instructors, classroom aides, and a sample of participants from programs that were operational during the evaluation period.

### Proposal Review

Project proposals, supplied by the Adult Education Section, were reviewed to gather data on the project. Project educational goals, objectives, and instructional activities were surveyed. Intervention activities, staff credentials and proposed program delivery designs were reviewed.

### Site Data From Management

Visits were scheduled to and conducted at each project site, where appropriate, which was operational during the evaluation period. Site directors and project instructors were provided with data collection forms to be completed prior to the visit of the evaluation team. The evaluator was also provided with copies of project IAEPs to be used in participant profiles. Classroom instruction and activities were observed and data recorded on forms developed and revised by the evaluator.

### Site Data From Participants

An interview guide, appropriate for participants was developed and used to collect student data. Data were not available in all project sites since some sites were not operational during the evaluation visit.

## EVALUATION FINDINGS

The category designations (shelters, rehabilitation centers and rural centers) for projects were used as in the previous evaluation. These designations were particularly useful when reviewing project objectives. Findings are presented in categories and in the order of which evaluation questions were written so that the reader can "match" evaluation questions and evaluation findings.

Evaluation findings are presented in four different sections as they relate to identifiable characteristics. These sections include the following: Project characteristics [evaluation questions 1-3]; Profiles of the participants [evaluation questions 4-7]; Educational program structures [evaluation questions 8-13]; and Local and State program support [evaluation questions 14-17].

ADULT EDUCATION HOMELESS PROJECT PROVIDERS

1990-91 Projects

<u>Project</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Category</u>
Ashley County	Crossett Mini-Center	Rural
	Hamburg Adult Ed. Center	Rural
Bradley County	Warren Area Vo-Tech Center	Rural
Foothills Vo-Tech	Wilbur Mills Alcohol & Drug Treatment Center	Rehab
Jefferson County	Salvation Army	Shelter
	Casa	Shelter
	Neighbor to Neighbor	Shelter
	Human Development/ Research Center	Rehab
Little Rock	Our House	Shelter
	Dorcas House	Shelter
Mississippi County Community College	Union Mission	Shelter
Monticello School District	Adult Education Center	Rural
Northwest Vo-Tech School	Decision Point	Rehab
	Springhouse	Rural
	Soul's Harbor	Shelter
Quapaw Vocational Technical School	Jackson House	Shelter
	Potter's Clay	Shelter
	Quapaw House	Rehab
	Salvation Army	Shelter
Red River Vo-Tech School	Hope in Action	Rural



## PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

What is the process for LEA site applications and has the process changed since the 1990 review?

Project proposals, supplied by the state coordinator's office, were reviewed to gather data on project applications. The evaluator reviewed each project's objectives in terms of its classification or category (Shelter Centers, Rural Centers, and Rehabilitation Centers) as defined in the previous project evaluation. Each proposal was reviewed to determine the project's goals, objectives, intervention activities and expected participant outcomes.

Many of the objectives were common to all three categories of project applications. Some project objectives were included in only two of the categories. Others were unique to a specific category. The influencing factors were the provisions for meeting not only the educational but other needs of the homeless clients.

Project objectives common to all three categories are:

- (1) To identify barriers and provide programs and services to assist homeless persons in meeting basic personal and educational needs.
- (2) To teach skills in reading, math and language for basic remediation, upgrading and preparation for the GED exam leading to a high school diploma or to a certificate of equivalency.
- (3) To teach life skills and provide assistance in developing coping behaviors.
- (4) To provide instruction in employability skills and prepare individuals for the workforce.
- (5) To develop confidence and self-esteem.

Additional project objectives included in Rural Centers and Shelter applications are:

- (1) To assist clients in learning how to locate homes and other services for food, shelter, child care, and transportation.
- (2) To provide networking with area agencies for meeting basic and special needs.
- (3) To provide facilities for instruction, counseling and guidance, and coordination with referring agencies and providers.

Project objectives included for Rehabilitation Centers only are:

- (1) To open new horizons so students may seize opportunities when they present themselves.
- (2) To provide guidance to insure maximum potential for a return to traditional living patterns.

Are there evidences of media announcements being used in recruiting students?

Projects used varied and multiple recruitment strategies. Pamphlets were designed for projects for distribution to area agencies and public places. Some projects relied on radio and other media announcements. Projects often receive these services free of charge.

Word of mouth communication serves as a recruitment strategy for a very large percentage of homeless projects. Homeless persons seeking assistance often encounter each other in their search for resources.

Projects located at shelters, as well as rehabilitation centers, have an available clientele because of other services provided. Some centers/shelters guarantee 100 percent participation of clients in all life and academic skills classes.

Projects that had the most success recruiting were those that were involved in some type of networking system with other community agencies/providers that serve homeless or otherwise displaced persons. Agencies involved in networking systems include, churches, welfare and other human resources agencies, counseling agencies, housing authorities, job training organizations (JTPA) funded through grants, and law enforcement/judicial agencies.

What other types of recruiting strategies are used?

A very successful strategy involves indirect activities associated with membership and service to community boards and service groups. Projects that have a board organized for the Adult Homeless Project have proven to be very successful in publicizing services available. Almost as successful are those projects whose directors or other employees serve on some otherwise constituted community service board. The evaluator recommends that at least one project teacher/employee/director serve on one or more community service boards so that opportunity to convey project goals and objectives can be enhanced.

#### PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Is an individual adult education plan on file for each student?

Each project site completed an individual adult education plan for each of its homeless students. Copies of IAEPs were made available to the evaluator for data analysis and the development of student profiles. The IAEP form used was provided by the state project coordinator's office.

Most projects use the IAEP as an entry document for gathering demographic data on homeless students. The portions of the form used to record education levels and goals are completed after some interaction with clients, including both formal and informal testing.

What type of objectives are stated for short-term and long-term student learning?

Writing goals was often difficult because some students did not attend on a regular basis. However, most student IAEPs included some type short-term or long-term goals. The process was also limited in part by the lack of a concise statement as to the nature of the goal statement. The state coordinator has already made plans for revising the goals' statement to eliminate any ambiguity.

Because of the lack of a clear statement about whether the goal statement should be a learning goal or a life goal, IAEPs included both kinds of goals. Some goal statements included behaviors that students would demonstrate as they reached their goals.

Long-term and short-term goals are hard to categorize, lending support to the use of the revised IAEP form as noted in the appendix as "revised." The revised form calls only for short-term goals. Long-term and short-term goals were also hard to categorize because of differences in educational levels of students entering the programs and the nature of individual needs. Obtaining a GED might be a short-term goal for some student and a long-term goal for another.

Educational goals ranged from learning to read to building proficiency for entry to a vo-tech school. Many students' goals related to remediation work, usually in reading and math. Other students were preparing to pass the GED exam. For a few students very simple but realistic goals were listed including an increased interest in education and the student's return to class. Some projects had educational goals listed on separate documents.

Goals related to life plans were listed on several student IAEPs. These goals ranged from the very short and desperate "to survive" to the more reflective "get life's priorities in order." Many goal statements included a need for greater self esteem with observed learning behaviors such as combing one's hair or bathing daily. Other students wanted to find a place to stay, find a job, and/or get back with family and friends. Perhaps the most sobering goal on any form was "just to be somebody."

Whether goals were simple or sophisticated, the evaluator noted that without exception teachers, aides, and administrators exhibited special, earnest, positive and caring attitudes toward homeless students. The evaluator

will provide recommendations later in this report for goal statements to be included on the IAEP.

What profile of the homeless can be developed and documented with data from these programs?

Data were gathered from the Individual Adult Education Plan (IAEP) completed for project participants. A total of 315 IAEPs were used to construct a participant profile for the statewide project. A copy of the IAEP is included in the Appendix of this report. Project participants identified all support service needs they felt applicable.

The Educational Level. See Tables 1, 2

Data revealed that 96 percent of the participants had completed grade six (6). Nearly 75 percent of the participants had completed grade nine (9). Only 17 percent of the participants had completed grade twelve (12). Only slightly more than three (3) percent of the participants had attended college with less than one (1) percent indicating they had completed college. The majority of participants (57.87%) were included in a grade completion range of grade nine (9) through grade eleven (11).

Grade levels for participants changed very little from the 1989-90 to the 1990-91 project years. Ninety (90) percent of the participants in the 1990-91 year had completed grade seven (7) while only eighty-seven (87) of the 1989-90 participants had completed grade seven (7). The greatest change in participant grade level completion was at the ninth (9) grade which changed from fifty-seven (57) percent in 1989-90 to seventy-nine (79) percent in 1990-91. The number of participants indicating they had completed grade twelve (12) decreased from twenty-five (25) to seventeen (17) percent. Only three (3) percent of the participants in both project years indicated they had attended college.

TABLE 1

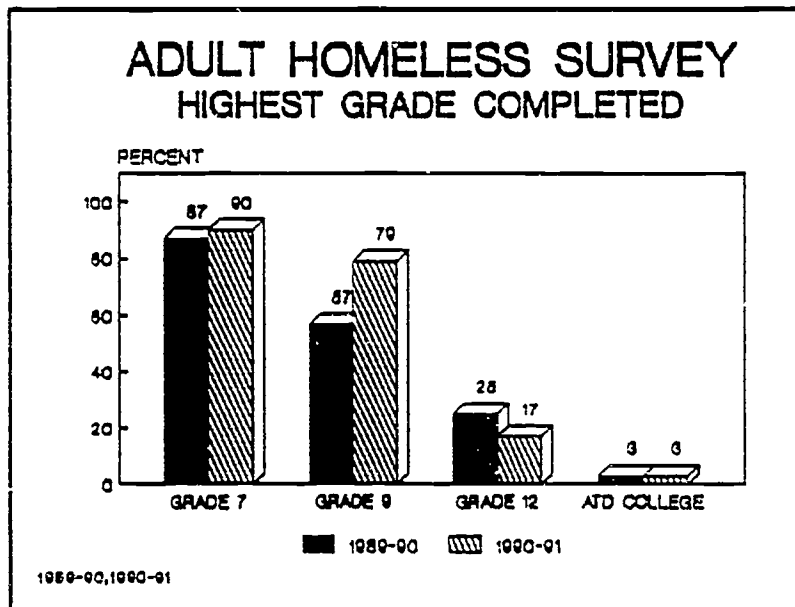
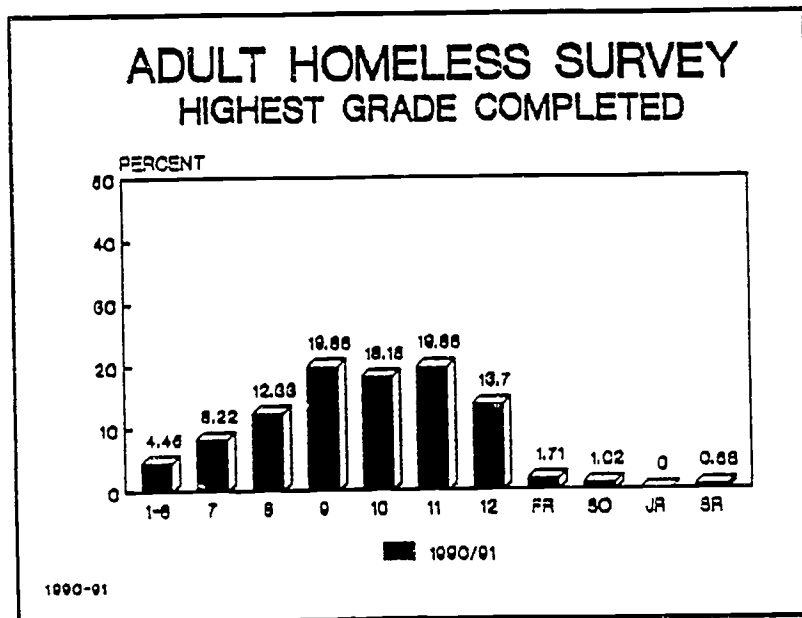


TABLE 2



Barriers to Employment. See Tables 3, 4, 5

Barriers to employment were categorized as "major" or "minor" based on data collected from participant IAEPs. Barriers marked by thirty (30) percent of the participants were classified as major. Barriers marked by less than thirty (30) percent of the participants were classified as minor. The percentages used for classification differentiation were chosen by the evaluator after reviewing the data.

Homelessness was considered by participants to be the greatest barrier to employment. Nearly seventy nine (79) percent of the participants indicated homelessness was a major barrier to employment. Although all the participants were homeless, twenty-one (21) percent were either employed or did not consider homelessness a barrier to employment.

Not having a high school diploma or its equivalent (GED) was identified as the second major barrier to employment. More than sixty-seven (67) percent of the participants felt not having a high school diploma or GED certificate was a major barrier to employment. Other major barriers and the percentage of participants identifying each are : (a) Reading skills, thirty seven (37) percent; (b) Math Skills, forty-seven (47) percent; (c) Substance abuse, forty-six (46) percent; and (d) Job skills, thirty-four (34) percent.

Other barriers classified as minor are: (a) Migrant, (b) Limited English, (c) Dependent children, (d) Handicapped, (e) Teenage parent, (f) Offender, and (g) Displaced homemaker. Only one category, displaced homemaker, at eleven (11) percent was identified as a minor barrier by more than ten (10) of the participants.

Barriers were identified by participants of the 1989-90 and 1990-91 projects at about the same levels. The most significant change in frequency identified by participants revealed by the data was in the category "lack of a high school diploma." Fifty-one (51) percent of the participants during the 1989-90 project year identified this barrier while it was identified by sixty-seven (67) percent of the participants during the 1990-91 project year. The only other change greater than ten (10) percent was the category of "substance abuse," which increased from thirty-five (35) percent in 1989-90 to forty-six (46) percent in 1990-91.

TABLE 3

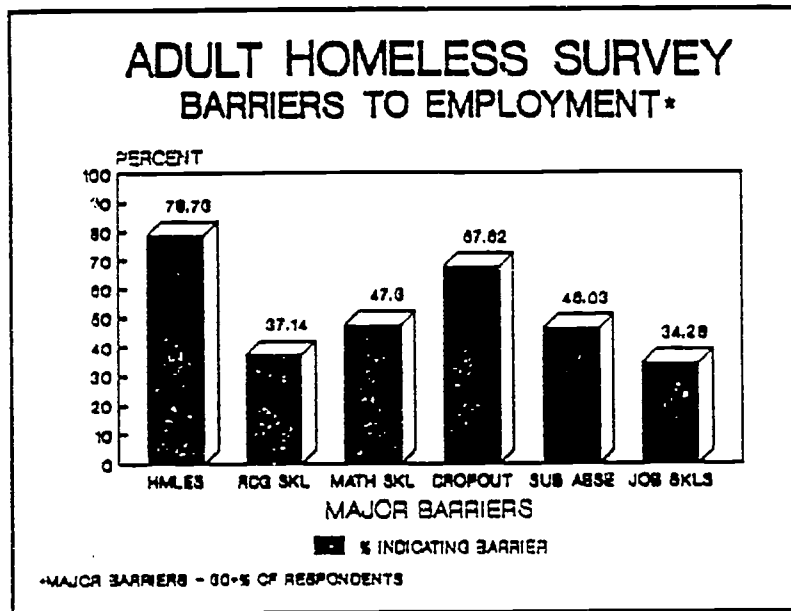


TABLE 4

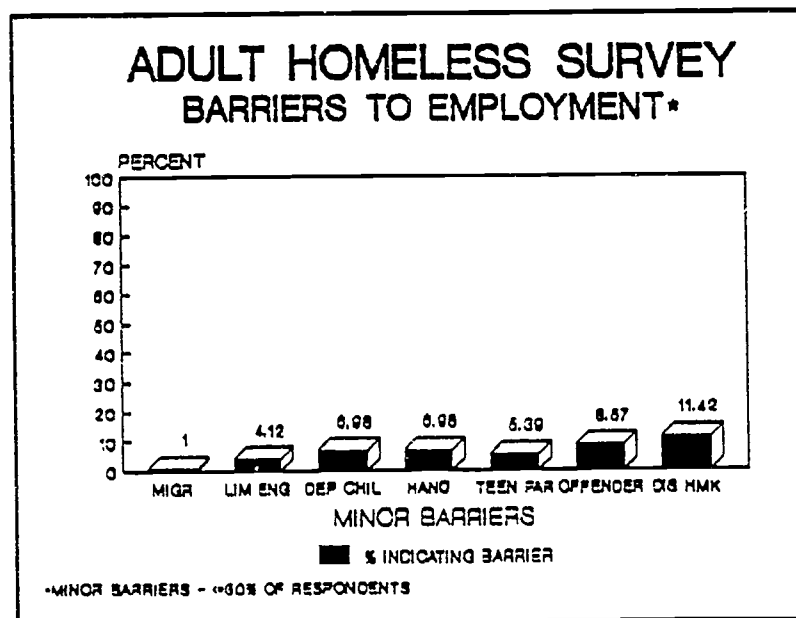
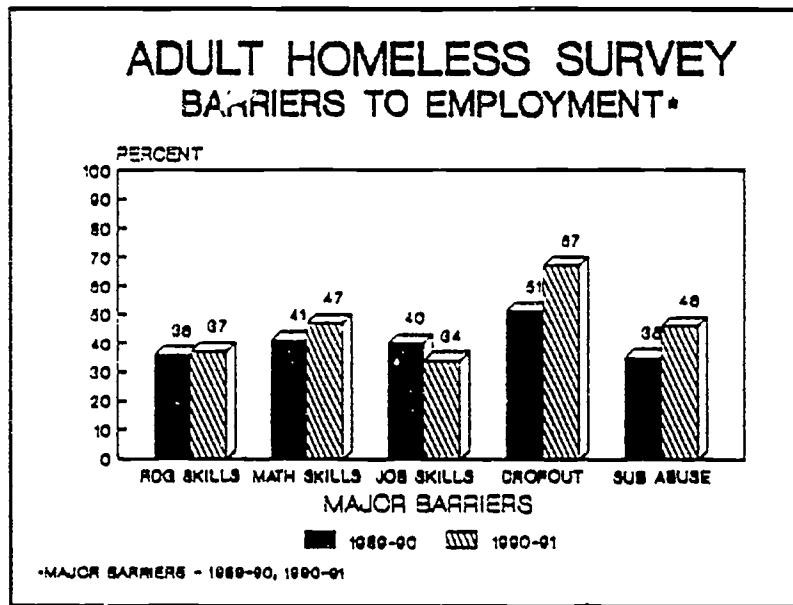


TABLE 5



Employment and Training Needs    See Tables 6, 7, 8

Employment and Training Needs were classified as "major" and "minor" categories based on the percent of participants who identified each need. The greatest need, identified by the largest percent of participants, was for the category of high school diploma\GED. Sixty-six (66) percent of the participants identified this need. Basic education skills were identified by thirty-six (36) percent of the participants. Other major needs revealed by the data were: (1) Career counseling, (2) Job skills development, and (3) Job specific skills.

Minor categories based on the frequency of selection by participants included: (1) English as a second language, (2) Pre-employment skills, (3) Work experience, (4) Upgrading, (5) Retraining. All minor categories were selected by less than twenty (20) percent of the participants.

Participants rated need for the high school diploma/GED at a much higher rate in 1990-91 than in 1989-90. The data revealed an increase from fifty-one (51) percent in 1989-90 to sixty-six (66) percent in 1990-91, which was larger than any other difference. Other major needs were not largely different for participants during the two project years.



TABLE 6

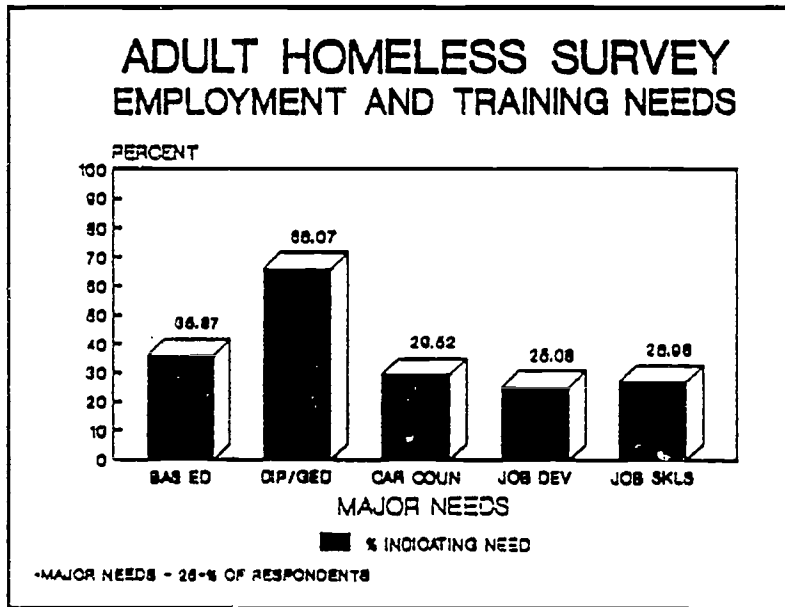


TABLE 7

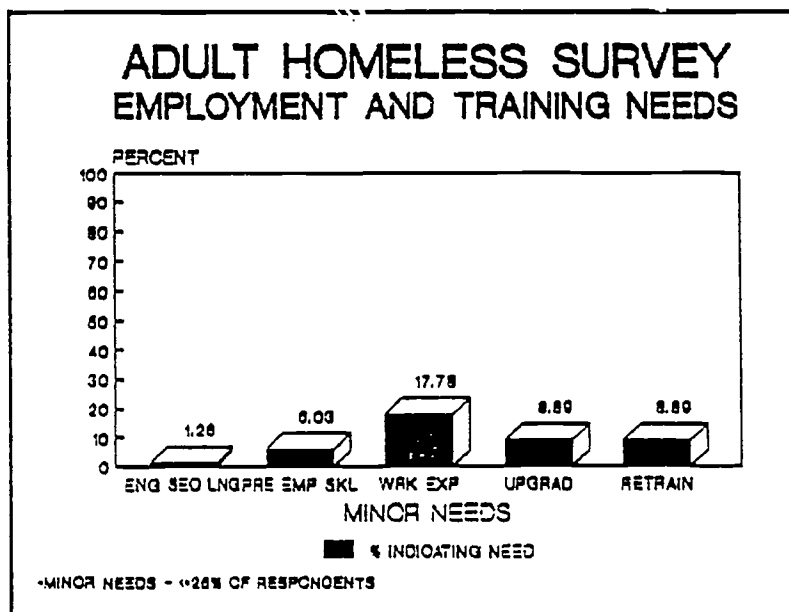
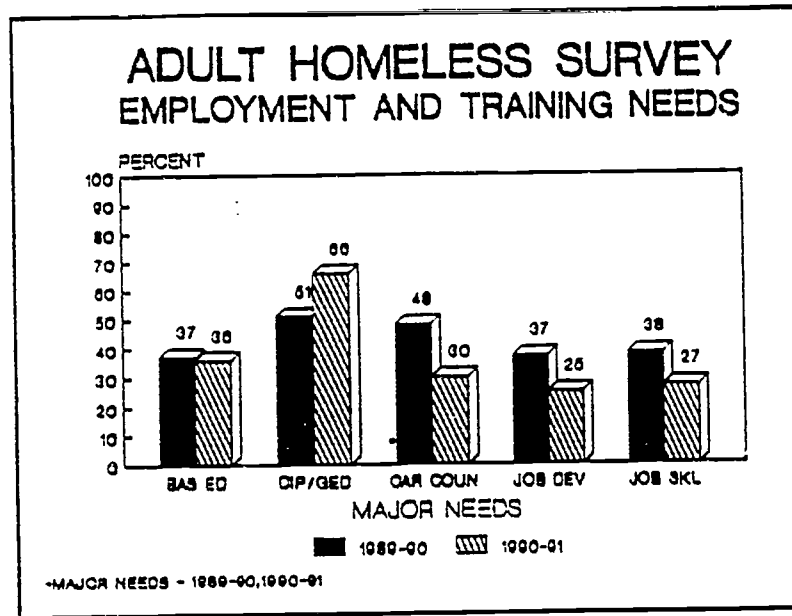


TABLE 8



Support Service Needs See Tables 9, 10, 11

Only four support service needs were rated as major (identified by more than twenty-five percent) for the 1990-91 project year. Rehabilitation services were identified by forty (40) percent of the participants. Housing and personal counseling were each identified by thirty-two (32) percent of the participants. Transportation was identified as a support service need by slightly more than twenty-five (25) percent of the participants.

Six categories were identified by less than twenty (20) percent of the participants. The following support service categories and percentage of frequency at which they were identified are: (a) Child care, twelve (12) percent; (2) Medical care, twelve (12) percent; (c) Financial counseling, seventeen (17) percent; (d) Legal counseling, six (6) percent; Relocation, sixteen (16) percent; and (e) Meals, ten (10) percent.

Rehabilitation service was the only category identified at a higher rate during 1990-91 than in the 1989-90 project year. Data revealed decreases in all other major support service needs.

TABLE 9

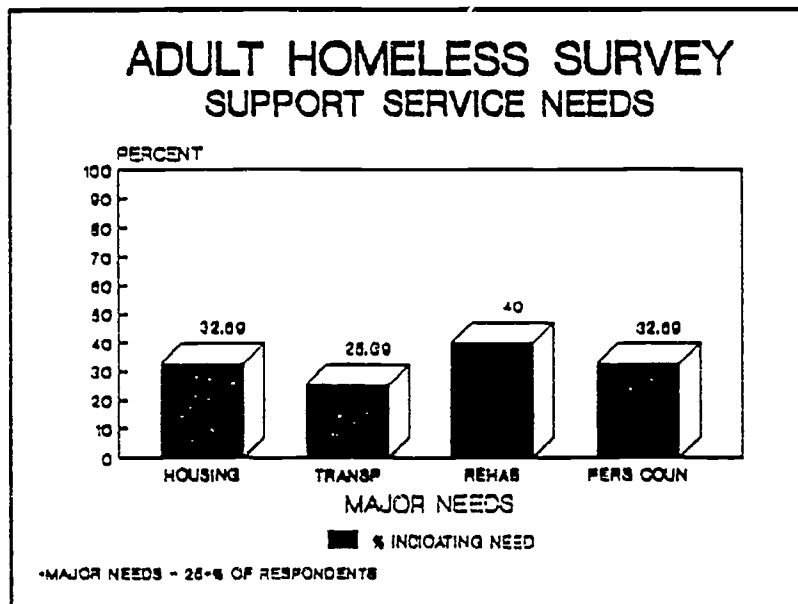


TABLE 10

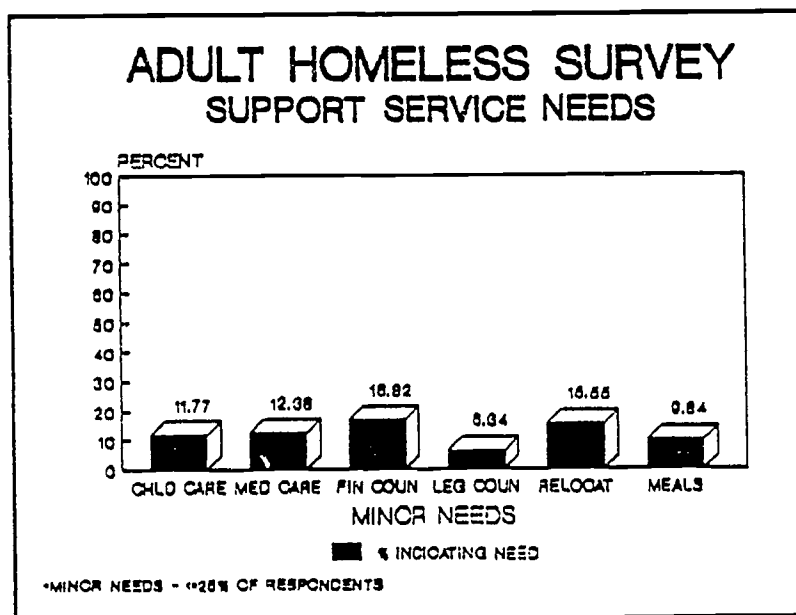
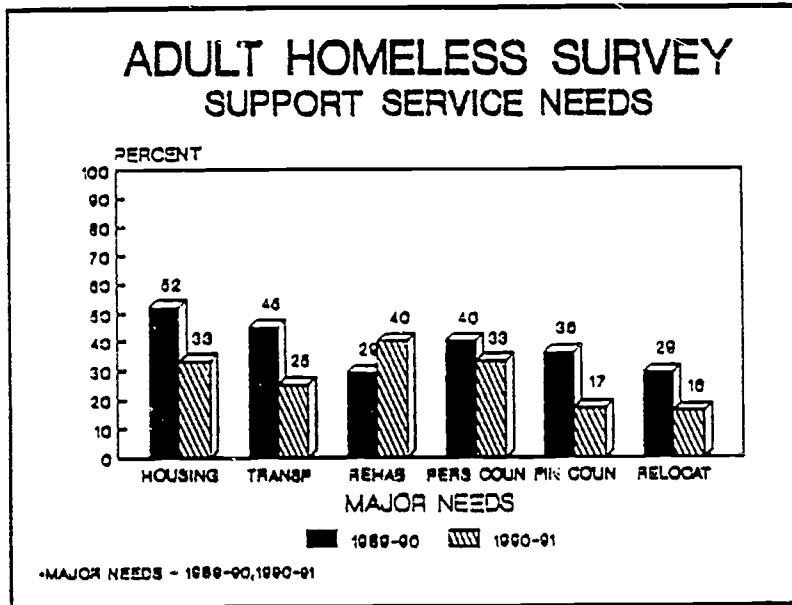


TABLE 11



### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

What is the number of students served by each site project for the most recent months? If this number is consistently moving directionally, why the change? If this number is a continuing site project, is there a change in the number of students served during the previous project time?

The number of students served at sites varies with seasonal and other factors. Projects for sites that have a rehabilitation component tend to have larger and more stable enrollments. Shelter and mission enrollments tend to change more often and attendance at these sites is less likely to be constant or consistent.

There were 415 students being served during the month of May (based on data from monthly attendance reports provided by the state coordinator's office). No clear directional movement could be accounted for except for the seasonal and climatic influences on worker migration and employment opportunities.

What curriculum is being used at each level? How is the curriculum determined as appropriate for each student?

The curriculum used for adult education for homeless people is reflective of individual student needs. Student needs vary from project to project depending on the nature of the center (rural, shelter or rehab) and other services provided.

The IAEP most often served as the entry document at all centers. Centers usually administer some type of assessment instrument at the time of entry. The "Test for Adult Basic Education" is the most common entry assessment instrument used. Other assessment instruments used are locator tests and interest inventories.

Curriculum materials are chosen for instruction at the appropriate level of instruction. Migrant students are often enrolled in "English as a Second Language" course.

Rural center program curricula tended to emphasize academic skills. Instruction is often geared toward the successful completion of the GED. Starting education levels were also somewhat higher than the beginning levels for students at shelters. Instruction at centers was much like teaching activities at traditional Adult education centers. Students not needing or wanting instruction for the GED usually needed remedial work in math and language arts. Several projects used computers to aid instruction. Software is available for adult education programs.

Rehabilitation centers instructional activities were more regular and structured because students were required to participate and were not able to leave the premises. Students tended to have higher entry education levels than center or shelter students. Instructional activities were aimed at both academic and life skills. Teaching activities are often focused on worthy use of time, values clarification, and employability skills. Students were also in need of self-concept enhancement activities which were provided by the instructors.

Shelter programs also emphasized both academic and life skills. Shelter clients were often in need of some personal counseling which was provided by instructors and outside professionals. Both academic and life skills were taught with a great deal of empathy and concern. Instructors appeared to be as concerned with meeting personal needs as educational needs. Often educational needs could be met only after attention to personal needs. Shelter program curricula was more individually and small-group oriented than curriculum in other types of projects.

Curriculum materials consisted of both commercial and instructor designed. Commercial materials included Steck-Vaughn, Contemporary, Cambridge, and Labauch. Materials approved and adopted for adult education were used in most centers. Rob & Dalton materials for life planning are used in some centers for life-skills instruction. Instructors have developed creative and novel programs and materials based on their experiences working with homeless adults. Such creative courses as "survival English," "sign puzzles," and phone book instructions for non-readers have been designed for low educationally functioning adults.

The strength of the curricular programs was the ability of the teachers and paraprofessionals to relate the appropriate instruction to student need. Instruction was provided that was congruent with age-level interest so that no student would feel embarrassed or demeaned by content or instructional technique.

**What are the credentials of the instructors?**

The instructional staff of homeless projects across the state had a range of experience from first year to twenty-four years. While some instructors were certified in adult education, others had teaching certificates in other disciplines. All instructional staff displayed characteristics of genuine concern for the social and educational progress of their students. These characteristics were confirmed by the statements of students in responses to participant survey questions. Students often responded that the most positive thing about the programs was their like for and appreciation of the instructor.

Paraprofessionals served as tutors, recruiters, and aides. They were also involved in collecting data, assessment, and facilitating project management.

Project directors had a variety of administrative assignments and responsibilities. All had some experience working with adult education. Some directors were involved in the daily operation of projects, while others simply administered the units on a report and accountability basis. Administration involvement in project operations depended on the other responsibilities of the director and whether the project was a rural center, a shelter or a rehabilitation center.

The operation and management of homeless projects in the state are adequate and functional. Sites activities are conducted in an open and forthright manner. Projects were found to be appropriately staffed and supported. All requests for interviews were granted. Both students and staff freely shared information about the project with the evaluator.

Quality of site staffs continues to be an outstanding element of the adult education for the homeless program. Cooperation of the state coordinator with project administration and staff continues to facilitate progress in meeting various site and state goals.

Are different types of instructional deliveries used with different students?

An outstanding element of Arkansas' program for adult education of the homeless is the strength of the instructional staff. Very careful attention is given to meeting the needs of students at an appropriate level and in a way that best communicates the intended learning.

Individualized instruction is used to meet a variety of needs that are unique to individuals occupying the entire spectrum of education levels and needs from non-readers to students who have attended college. Often students with diverse backgrounds and ranges of competence attend the same sessions. Students with advanced skills and abilities are used as tutors and mentors in some projects.

Except in rehabilitation centers where large groups attend classes, small group instruction is the commonly employed instructional model. Shelters tended to have small classes. Groups of three to ten students are taught a variety of skills from basic math to grammar and spelling. Paraprofessionals assist with instruction in projects where funding is available.

Classes at rural centers tended to have from twelve to twenty-five students in classes. Traditional instructional techniques were likely to be employed at these projects. Students at Rural Centers were likely to be area residents or residents living in housing provided through project assistance. Some students were able to attend because they received child care and/or transportation from some other service providers. Educational levels were not as diverse at rural centers because education is the primary service offered.

Rehabilitation centers usually had classes of twenty or more. Instructors at these centers were very capable and sensitive to student needs. Students tended to have higher education levels than students in other types of centers. The teaching staff did an excellent job in presenting materials and learning activities that were appropriate and did not insult the intelligence level of students. Employability and job skills, as well as coping skills, were presented in a very competent manner.

Where is the actual instruction taking place?

The kind and quality of classrooms varied with the type of project and the nature of other services associated with the project center. All sites had designated instructional centers more than adequate for instructional activities. Classrooms were well kept and orderly.

Rehabilitation centers tended to have larger but well organized classrooms. Clients were more likely to be required to attend education programs offered by the centers. Rooms were large and adequately furnished, and instructional and media equipment was provided. Class sessions were conducted in an orderly manner and appropriate for attending clientele.

Shelters tended to have smaller but appropriately sized instructional space, except for those shelters whose clients received services at another location. Shelter (in-house) centers were designed to accommodate students in a secure, comfortable atmosphere. This arrangement is especially conducive for instruction of students having small children.

Rural centers are likely to have traditionally designed educational classrooms. Centers are usually located in schools and/or school facilities or adult education centers. This type of arrangement is well suited for traditional instruction. Instructional materials and equipment may be shared with other educational organizations or programs. Transportation services are usually provided for instruction at rural centers by other service agencies.

Instructional spaces are uniquely designed to best accommodate the needs of the clientele which they serve. Project staff are pleased with the quality and quantity of space afforded for delivery of the educational programs.

What time(s) is instruction provided to the students?

Rural centers commonly had regularly scheduled classes meeting during the day. Classes meet at least twice each week in all projects and five days a week in a couple of projects. Classes in some centers were scheduled to begin as early as 8:00 a.m. and as late as 1:00 p.m. in others. All classes were scheduled for two hours. Students were able to enroll in more than one session at some adult education centers. Classes were scheduled during evening hours when an instructor had to travel to another city.

Shelters that had restricted access tended to offer classes during the day on a regular basis. Residents usually did not leave for employment. Instructors were able to structure their teaching activities at shelters around the time demands of other sites in the project. Shelters that



have open access often provided instruction at night to accommodate residents who had employment during the day.

Rehabilitation centers usually scheduled classes three to five days a week. Classes ranged from one to two hours in duration. Students are encouraged to continue attending classes at some other project site after the time to be spent in restricted residence has been satisfied.

What is the number of instruction hours for each student at each level?

Attendance reports are provided to the state office. Each local program mails to the state office a floppy disk which contains their monthly student data. The STUREC Software System was developed by MicroData Systems, Ltd. of Portage, Michigan. The Arkansas Adult Education Section contracted to have the program adapted for use in Arkansas in July, 1990.

As noted in Table 12 on the next page, monthly reports provide the number of students enrolled and the number of student contact hours provided. Students are grouped by reading levels 0-8 grade level and 9-12 grade level.

During the month of May there were 415 students enrolled in Homeless education programs. There were 240 students who read from 0 to grade 8 levels, representing about 60 percent of the total student population. There were 175 students identified as reading from grade 9 to grade 12 levels.

The total contact hours for all 415 students was 7208 hours, an average of 17.37 contact hours per student. The total contact for students reading at grade 8 or below was 5039 hours. This computes to an average of 20.99 contact hours per student for the month of May. The number of contact hours for students reading at grade 9 to grade 12 levels totaled 2169 for an average of 12.39 contact hours.

The number of contact hours for lower reading levels (0 to grade 8) students was nearly twice the amount for students reading at higher levels (grade 9 to grade 12). Students in rehabilitation programs were more likely to have higher reading levels. Students in projects classified as shelters tended to have lower reading levels.

#### PROGRAM SUPPORT

What support services are provided by the LEA for the students?

LEA's furnish a number of direct and indirect services for students. Project needs vary according to their organizational structure - whether they are rural centers, shelters or rehabilitation centers.

TABLE 12

## NUMBER OF STUDENT CONTACT HOURS

(Based on May attendance reports)  
(for one month only)

LEA	READING LEVEL	# STUDENTS	# CONTACT HOURS	AV. CONTACT HOURS/STUD
Ashley	0-8	9	189	18.78
County	9-12	8	66	8.25
Foothills	0-8	12	56	4.67
Vo-Tech	9-12	11	81	7.36
Jefferson	0-8	82	2205	26.89
County	9-12	100	1180	11.80
Little	0-8	10	49	4.9
Rock	9-12	12	77	6.42
Miss.	0-8	13	150	11.54
County	9-12	7	78	11.14
Monticello	0-8	4	59	14.75
	9-12	1	16	16.00
Northwest	0-8	17	145	8.53
Vo-Tech	9-12	10	78	7.80
Quapaw	0-8	32	415	12.97
Vo-Tech	9-12	13	163	12.54
Hope	0-8	1	24	24.00
	9-12	0	00	.00
Warren	0-8	60	1747	29.12
	9-12	13	430	33.01
totals		415	7208	17.37

Source: Special Project Coordinator's Office

Shelters provide housing, food and clothing. In some instances residents who are employed pay a nominal fee for shelter and food. In homes with limited access, such as homes for battered women, payment for services is not required. Educational materials are usually kept on site at shelters. Space for instruction is also provided on site.

Rehabilitation centers are also residential centers. Many of the residents are remanded to the centers by law enforcement agencies or the courts. Educational materials and equipment are maintained at rehabilitation center sites. Transportation is furnished for some residents who wish to enroll in studies not provided at the unit that might be provided by a nearby Vo-Tech school. Personal counseling and career counseling are provided at rehab centers.

Rural centers projects are operated as open centers. LEA's typically provide facilities and educational materials. Rural centers are often able to provide a wider range of services because of the accessibility and mobility of students. Center staff usually work closely with other agency providers. Housing, welfare benefits, aid for dependent children, job searches and placement and medical care are other project service activities. Transportation and child care may be provided so mothers with small children can attend classes. Because rural centers are likely to be located at a public school, Vo-Tech school, or Adult Education Center facility, traditional educational materials, supplies and equipment are provided by the LEA.

Is there evidence of networking with other local service agencies?

Every project was involved in some networking activities. The objectives of networking activities were twofold. Some activities were aimed at recruiting students while other activities were conducted to provide additional services to the project's homeless. In many cases the activities fulfilled both objectives.

Networking agencies can also be classified into two categories -- private and public. Private agencies involved in networking activities include such organization as ministerial alliances, organizations for battered women, literacy councils, and service clubs.

Public agencies usually receive funding from some governmental agency. Human development and resource agencies offer services for poor, homeless, and otherwise disposed persons. Housing departments, welfare agencies, and employment security divisions can be networked to provide services for homeless persons. Adult Education agencies provide educational services at some project sites. Job training programs that require an educational component are

frequently coordinated with homeless adult education programs.

Rehabilitation centers need very little networking in the formal sense. Most of their students are referred by some social or legal agency.

Networking was best accomplished in those projects that had direct and regularly planned activities. Networking efforts are greatly enhanced when project staff were also involved in service on boards or staffs of other agency providers.

Is there a way to document gains in achievement for the ABE and GED students?

The data reveal that achievement gains are not high priority concerns for all homeless persons. For the two-year period of 1989-1991 nearly twenty (20) percent of project participants had completed grade twelve (12). Fifty-one (51) percent in 1989-90 and sixty-seven (67) percent in 1990-91 felt that not having a high school diploma was a major barrier to employment. About the same percent listed getting a high school diploma\GED as a major service needs.

Many project participants were more concerned about other changes such as breaking substance abuse patterns, securing housing, and finding employment. Other students felt that relearning and refining skills were just as important as obtaining the diploma/GED.

Student achievement levels were assessed upon entry into the program. Practice exams were administered by project staff to assess student readiness for the final examination and appropriate remediation work, if needed.

The evaluation team observed that the short term nature of project participant membership (usually less than 30 days) caused the documentation of gains process to become more difficult and of less importance. Students who were motivated toward obtaining the GED were likely to remain in the project for more than the normal thirty (30) day membership. Project services were extended for those students who needed extra instructional time for successful completion of GED examination.

What assistance is provided by the state coordinator?

- A. Staff Training. The Special Projects Coordinator and project staff were involved in several staff development and training activities during the program year. Presentations were made at the NYS Life Management Conference on December 2-4, 1990 in Albany. The State coordinator along with other project staff attended and made presentations at the

Interagency Council on the Homeless Region VI  
Workshop in Arlington, Texas, in April of 1991.

An Adult Education Homeless Programs Inservice  
Training Meeting was conducted for all programs staff  
in North Little Rock during April of 1991. On August  
22-23, 1991, the Arkansas Homeless Conference was  
sponsored by the Arkansas Interagency Council on the  
Homeless.

Project staff are encouraged to attend state and  
regional homeless conferences. Funds are made  
available for staff travel in project budgets.

- B. The office of the state coordinator provides regular  
assistance to project staff. In addition to guidance  
and assistance with project activities, materials and  
equipment needs are provided when funds are  
available.
- C. The Special Projects Coordinator makes monitoring  
visits throughout the project period. The state  
coordinator is available and on call as needed by any  
of the site programs. In addition to visiting with  
project staff the coordinator has been available for  
and has met with other service provider boards,  
agencies and resources groups.
- D. Data are reported to the state office on a monthly  
basis. Attendance and contact hour reports, as well  
as other pertinent project information are  
communicated by each local project.
- E. In addition to support for local project media  
efforts, the state coordinator's office through the  
Vocational and Education Division provides  
advertisement and dissemination services for the  
homeless projects on a state-wide basis.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the review of appropriate documents, findings of this study and insight gained by the evaluator, the following conclusions appear warranted:

- \* The adult education for the homeless projects provide a variety of education and education related services to a variety of participants through a diversified and appropriate delivery system.
- \* Homeless adults recognize their needs and are very much interested in becoming better trained, educated and employed so they can engage in more traditional life styles.
- \* Adult education programs for the homeless are and need to be complimented\extended to provide program participants with "education for life."
- \* Conventional "quality" measures for participant achievement, accomplishment and project successes may not be appropriate assessment procedures for adult education for homeless programs.
- \* The adult education for the homeless programs are indeed the "last-best" chance learning and training opportunities for a growing number of the State's population.
- \* Project personnel are dedicated and competent teachers who view homeless adults from a holistic perspective and provide more than educational instruction.
- \* Positive community relationships between homeless and residential populations may be enhanced by education for the homeless programs as evidenced by staff interactions with other resource and service providers.
- \* The organizational structure for management and operation of the adult homeless education programs in the State is effective, functional and well-placed.

The following recommendations are based on needs that were observed by the evaluator during the visits to program sites.

Need: Adult learners need to have and see immediate successes.

Recommendation: Lessons should be developed for students who attend only a few hours or a few sessions.

The state adult education office with a few selected project directors and instructors should develop and devise short

term learning packets of instruction appropriate for homeless persons who attend only a few classes for closure and success.

Need: Education and life goals should be included on student IAEP's.

Recommendation: The state adult education office should revise the IAEP to provide space for both education and life goals.

Need: Recruiting strategies should be well planned by each LEA to maximize service and networking opportunities.

Recommendation: Recruiting activities can be facilitated by project staff service on community boards and other service provider agency boards.

Need: Complete and timely monthly reports should be submitted to the state adult education office.

Recommendation: The state adult education office should continue to require complete monthly reports and expand its use of the STUREC Software Package.

Need: Student progress should be assessed and recorded periodically during the project period.

Recommendation: Program instructors should use student IAEP's to monitor student progress, as well as to collect data when students enter the program.

#### SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE PROFILES

Nearly every project had developed unique program strategies to facilitate the education process. A few practices were worthy of special mention. While computers and technological advances should be utilized, very simple, unsophisticated, and inexpensive practices are also useful.

##### Survival English

Survival English is a language arts "short course" designed to not only enhance language skills but to protect persons with limited reading skills from harm that might come to them because of their inability to read. The course is taught just as other courses, but it is different in its content.

Course content is designed to teach or emphasize words and phrases of warning, caution and prohibition that all adults should be able to read and understand. Examples of words and phrases included are; do not enter, poison, danger, live wires, and fire.

This course is particularly appropriate for low functioning adults that are not likely to attend regularly or for extended periods.

## Sign Puzzles

Sign puzzles can be used for language and life skills learning. A five by five square matrix with signs and their inscriptions are helpful for instruction of low functioning adults. Some puzzle pictures signs, including words and phrases of special interest to adult homeless are the following: free space, help wanted, apply within, and free sample. Many other useful messages can be taught.

Sign puzzles are also useful for depicting dangers such as no swimming, stop, do not enter, enter, exit, no smoking, and closed. Printed signs are readily available through public or governmental agencies.

## Success Building

Homeless adults often need to experience success in very short periods of time. Instructors who have access to copying machines can disassemble texts and make one-lesson texts. Some adult homeless students may never attend more than four or five hours of class. Students can more easily recognize accomplishment when provided short one-lesson text materials. Text materials that contain a large number of lessons are not likely to be completed.

Early success in learning can enhance self-esteem and create interest in further learning. A word of caution, however, is necessary. Instructors should be aware of copyright provisions and other restrictions.

## Community Networking

Word of mouth communication has been proven over the ages to be most effective. A local adult homeless education board can be created to enhance spoken communication with other service providers and community agencies to facilitate recruiting and assistance efforts.

Board members that can be valuable assets are directors of housing programs, welfare agency personnel, church groups, employment agency directors, job training personnel and school counselors. Regular meetings can be scheduled. Often informal communications are warranted on a daily basis.

If an adult homeless education project board is not feasible, program personnel should serve on some other agency board, if possible.



APPENDIX

EVALUATION QUESTIONS - DATA SOURCES

1. What is the process for LEA site applications and has the process changed since the 1990 review?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are there evidences of media announcements being used in recruiting students?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What other types of recruiting strategies are used?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Is an individual adult education plan on file for each student?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What type of objectives are stated for short-term and long-term student learning?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What profile of the homeless can be developed and documented with data from these programs?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the number of students served by each site project for the most recent months? If this number is consistently moving directionally, why the change? If this is a continuing site project, is there a change in the number of students served during the previous project time?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What curriculum is being used at each level? How is the curriculum determined as appropriate for each student?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What are the credentials of the instructors?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Are different types of instructional deliveries used with different students?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Where is the actual instruction taking place?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

12. What time(s) is instruction provided to the students?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the number of instruction hours for each student at each level?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

14. What support services are provided by the LEA for the students?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

15. Is there evidence of networking with other local service agencies?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

16. Is there a way to document gains in achievement for the ABE and GAE students?

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

17. What assistance is provided by the state coordinator?

- A. Staff Training
- B. Technical Assistance
- C. Monitoring Visits
- D. Data Reporting
- E. Media Assistance

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS  
PARTICIPANT SURVEY

Project \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_  
Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

I. How has the program helped you--i.e., what skill areas are you working on? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

II. What do you like best about this program--i.e., teacher, materials, the idea of learning and helping yourself? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

III. Is it difficult for you to participate in this program--i.e., time, children, transportation. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

IV. What do you like least about this program--i.e., the teacher, the materials, required to come. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

V. Have you learned about other places to go for help--i.e., housing, food, more education, job openings. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS  
SITE CHECKLIST

Project \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_

1. Is there a designated center to provide education for the Homeless?    Yes            No            If No, explain.

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2. Is the center equipped to provide short-term intensive learning experiences including basic skills, pre-employment skills, practical life skills, and social interaction skills?    Yes            No            Describe:

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3. Are student attendance/progress records in order?    Yes            No            If No, explain.

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4. Is an IAEP on file for each student?    Yes            No  
If No, explain.

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6. Are there evidences of disseminating information about the Adult Education for the Homeless on file (brochures, presentation dates, media announcements, etc)? If so, describe:

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7. Are there evidences of referrals to other programs and/or agencies? If so, describe:

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ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS  
SITE DATA COLLECTION FORM  
ADMINISTRATOR/COORDINATOR

PROJECT: \_\_\_\_\_

SITE: \_\_\_\_\_

RESPONDENT NAME AND TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I. What is the history of your relationship with Adult Education?  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the history of your relationship with Adult Education for  
the Homeless? \_\_\_\_\_

II. Did you write the application grant proposal? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, who did? \_\_\_\_\_

III. What services does your unit provide for the Homeless Project?

A. Finance: Bookkeeping \_\_\_\_\_; Purchasing \_\_\_\_\_; Payroll \_\_\_\_\_  
Travel \_\_\_\_\_; Other \_\_\_\_\_

B. Supervision of instructor: Observation \_\_\_\_\_; Evaluation \_\_\_\_\_

C. Outreach recruiting \_\_\_\_\_; Agency coordination \_\_\_\_\_

D. Media announcements: Brochures \_\_\_\_\_; radio PSA's \_\_\_\_\_;

Civic club speeches \_\_\_\_\_; Other \_\_\_\_\_

E. Facility: Provide for \_\_\_\_\_; Make arrangements for \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Who provides the instruction for the Homeless project \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

V. How would you rate the level of support for this program from the  
shelters/agencies etc. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

VI. How would you rate the support and assistance provided by the State Department's Homeless Project Coordinator? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

VII. How many homeless sites do you monitor? \_\_\_\_\_  
A. Have you lost any? \_\_\_\_\_; Started new ones \_\_\_\_\_.  
Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

VIII. Are there ways in which the program could be improved-- i.e., materials/curriculum, state assistance, community support, agency networking. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE HOMELESS  
SITE DATA COLLECTION FORM  
Instructor

Project \_\_\_\_\_ Site \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent \_\_\_\_\_

I. How long have you been associated with adult education?

\_\_\_\_\_

A. In what role?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

II. Describe the program you have at this center.

A. The population served.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. The facility used.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. The schedule for student/teacher interaction.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

III. How do you recruit potential participants?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

A. Have any techniques proven particularly successful?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. Have you experienced any particular problems in getting participants into the program?

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C. Are you involved in a referral network with other agencies, civic clubs, churches, etc.?

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D. Have you encountered any problems in coordinating the program with outside agencies or organizations?

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IV. What types of instruction delivery are used in the center (small groups, individualized, computer assisted, etc.)?

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A. Does the "homeless student" require a different type of instruction than regular adult education students? Yes No  
If so explain.

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- V. How are your students distributed in working on ABE, GAE, and Life Skills?
- A. What percent of your students are working in ABE skills?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B. What percent of your students are working in GAE skills?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B1. In the GAE skills area, what content area is in most need by the students?

- 
- C. What percent of your time do you spend on teaching Life skills? \_\_\_\_\_
- C1. What Life skills areas do you find that the students appear to get the most benefit?

- 
- C2. What Life skill areas have been the least successful and been abandoned?
- 

VI. What instructional materials are you currently using in:

ABE: \_\_\_\_\_

GAE: \_\_\_\_\_

Life skills: \_\_\_\_\_

VII. Do you use volunteers in the program (includes agency personnel or residents and outside volunteers)? Yes No

A. Who are they (group name not individual names)?

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B. How do you use them?

---

---

C. How are they recruited?

---

---

D. Will you continue to use them?      Yes      No

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VIII. On the average, how long do participants remain in the program?

ABE: \_\_\_\_\_

GAE: \_\_\_\_\_

Life skills: \_\_\_\_\_

A. What strategies/incentives have proven effective in promoting continued participation?

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IX. Do you provide support services to the participant?      Yes      No

If yes:

A. Do you provide child care?      Yes      No

A1. If so; how effective have these arrangements proven to be in assisting the adult?

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B. Do you provide transportation for participants?      Yes      No

B1. If so; how effective have these arrangements proven to be in assisting the adult?

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X. How would you evaluate the level of support for this program from the shelters and/or agencies, and in the community as a whole?

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XI. How would you evaluate the support and assistance provided by the State Department (Adult Education) regarding:

A. General Supervision and Guidance? \_\_\_\_\_

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B. Workshops and Training Sessions? \_\_\_\_\_

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C. Other requests for help? \_\_\_\_\_

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XII. Are there ways in which the program could be improved, i.e. managing the program, materials, curriculum, state assistance, community support?

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