



JULY UPDATE



[Smart Solutions to Homelessness- Become an Ally!](#)

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Homeless Services Center Funding Update



(Photo credit: Dan Croyo, Santa Cruz Sentinel)

This month began the cuts to the day services at the Homeless Services Center (HSC). The County and City of Santa Cruz are continuing to seek

2015 Point In Time Homeless Census Released



In June, the [2015 Point In Time \(PIT\) Homeless Census](#) was released, announcing a significant 44% reduction in countywide homelessness since the 2013 PIT.

The 2015 data shows:

- Reductions in chronic, veteran and youth homelessness
- 69% of the 1,964 individuals counted were unsheltered
- 84% of individuals surveyed were living in a Santa Cruz County residence at the time they became homeless

At the conference, Smart Solutions member Phil Kramer urged the community to view the encouraging reduction as a call to increase rather than lessen our efforts to implement what works to end homelessness. Chris Brown, a formerly homeless new father, inspired listeners to remember that we cannot celebrate success while even one human is homeless.

The biennial Point In Time Homeless Census is sponsored by the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP) and produced by Applied Survey Research (ASR).

ways of assisting and the community is encouraged to [donate](#) as well.

Read the [July Santa Cruz Sentinel article](#) for the latest update on the service cuts- what has been closed and what will remain open.

Also, check out the [Grand Jury's report](#) on homelessness.

Where to Go for Essential Services



(Photo credit: Kevin Johnson, Santa Cruz Sentinel)

Ally Spotlight:

Meredy Wells, a local advocate for the homeless, has put together a helpful resource for folks looking for meals, showers and restrooms in the city of Santa Cruz. She calls it the [Santa Cruz Free Guide](#)*. Available to post, print and share.

In need of other services or in another area? Dial 2-1-1 for 24/7 referrals.

*Smart Solutions to Homelessness and United Way are not responsible for the guide's content.

What Are Smart Solutions?

Evidence-based

[View Photos from the Press Conference](#)
[Read the Sentinel Article](#)

Help Us Stuff the Bus and Send Students Back to School Ready to Learn!



We have over 4,000 students experiencing homelessness* and/or extreme hardships in our county. Living in uncertain, impoverished conditions makes it difficult for students to learn and thrive in school. The *All In* countywide plan calls for increased economic and educational opportunities to end family homelessness by 2020 in Santa Cruz County.

Smart Solutions to Homelessness is a proud sponsor of the [United Way Stuff the Bus](#) program, which provides backpacks and supplies to the County Office of Education Write Start participants. Join us and help a student in need today! By providing necessary supplies, you can help our county's homeless children and youth stay engaged and successful in school, increasing their opportunities to move out of homelessness into successful futures.

[Buy a fully stocked backpack for only \\$25!](#)

*In accordance with the federal McKinney-Vento Act, students identified as homeless include families that are living doubled up. The PIT Census uses the HUD definition which does not include those families.

All In Plan Implementation Updates



Produce measurable results

Cost effective

Benefit the entire community

Take a step toward ending homelessness

Support the dignity of each individual

Our VISION is a Santa Cruz County in which every community member has some form of safe shelter, and where homelessness is a rare occurrence.

Our MISSION is to build the community will to reduce and ultimately end homelessness in Santa Cruz County through education and collaborative action.

When *All In- Toward a Home For Every County Resident: The Santa Cruz County Community Strategic Plan to Prevent, Reduce, and Eventually End Homelessness* was launched in April this year, it outlined several areas essential to successful implementation, including increased coordination, staffing, and funding resources for housing. We would like to share just a couple of the implementation activities going on this summer.

[Read the Update: New Staffing and Working Groups](#)

Smart Solutions House Gatherings



"I learned tonight that every homeless person has a story, and that there are some good ways to respect and approach homeless people in a friendly and open manner." "I will be able to be more thoughtful and questioning about issues of homelessness and especially about individual people who are homeless." These insights were gained by two House Gathering participants after one of the first evening conversations hosted by Smart Solutions.

House Gatherings are casual living room gatherings of the host's friends, neighbors, co-workers, and acquaintances to socialize together with food and conversation, to participate in a one and a half hour dialogue and considerations about homelessness. Annette March and Robert Graham (pictured above) established these local events designed to shift our everyday culture and beliefs about homelessness through personal interaction.

The socializing aspect of the house gatherings is central to their success, designed to foster safe, exploratory dialogue...

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