
Justice Fact Sheet

Preliminary Results from Enhanced Street Youth Study (ESYS)

Three quarters of youth had a history of youth detention or incarceration¹

- 22% (29) of street youth were held overnight; 34% (45) were held one month or less; 13% (18) were held 1 year or less; 5% (7) were held over 1 year.
- 71% (71) of incarcerated youth were First Nations, 20% (20) were Métis.
- 48% (48) of incarcerated youth had been expelled or dropped out of school; of those who were no longer in school, 62% (30) had completed grade 9 or less.
- 48% (48) of incarcerated youth had been assigned a social worker in the past year.
- 17% (17) of incarcerated youth had been in foster care in the past year.
- 37% (37) of incarcerated youth had used an addiction program in the past year.

Over half of incarcerated youth experienced homelessness in the past 3 months

- 43% (43) slept at the home of a friend; 34% (34) had slept at the home of a parent, relative, group or foster home.
- 27% (27) used a shelter in the past year.
- 11% (11) slept most often in a street, park or public place, for example, under bridges.
- 41% (41) said conflict was the main reason for homelessness; 23% (23) said affordability was the main reason.

Almost half of incarcerated youth reported work or government cheques as their main source of income

- 20% (20) reported theft or selling drugs as their main source of income.
- 4%² reported sex trade work as their main source of income.
- 14% (14) reported bottle recycling or other odd jobs as main source of income.

Addictions were significantly associated with youth detention or incarceration

- Youth who had been incarcerated were almost five times more likely to have been enrolled in an addictions program than other youth (OR = 4.9, p = 0.01)³.

Sexual exploitation among incarcerated youth was not uncommon

- 15% (15) have been involved in the sex trade.
- 20% (20) have felt they owed someone sex; the most common item received for sex was shelter, food and clothing, or cigarettes, drugs and alcohol.
- 26% (26) have been coerced into sex, and 8% (8) have been involved in the sex trade.

Neglect and emotional abuse were significantly associated with youth incarceration

- Youth who experienced neglect were three times more likely to be incarcerated than other youth in the study (OR= 3.2 p=0.01)².
- Youth who experienced emotional abuse were more than twice as likely to have been incarcerated (OR= 2.5 p =0.03)².

Two out of five youth who have been detained or incarcerated did not know where to go to talk about a physical or mental health problem

- 42% (42) did not know where to go to talk about physical or mental health issues.



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¹ 99 youth had experienced youth incarceration

² Counts less than 5 are suppressed.

³ OR (odds ratio) is a statistical test of association between two characteristics. A p value under 0.05 expresses "statistical significance."

Enhanced Street Youth Study (ESYS)

What is the ESYS study about?

- The purpose of the ESYS is to **better understand risk behaviours in street involved youth**, especially risks associated with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and blood borne infections. The study contains much information about education, income, interaction with the justice system and social services and homelessness.
- ESYS is part of a national surveillance project which began in 1997. It is supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada. Saskatoon joined the study in 1999. Saskatoon has conducted the survey and testing for five of the past six phases. The sixth phase of the study ran from June to October, 2009.

Who participated?

- In 2009 one hundred and thirty one (131) street involved youth in Saskatoon participated in the national ESYS study. Street-involved youth were defined as individuals aged 15 to 24 years who, in the last six months, had run away from home,

were thrown out or were without a fixed address for three days or more.

- In Saskatoon youth who participated in 2009 ranged in age from 16 to 23 years and were informally recruited through the Saskatoon Health Region - Public Health Services, AIDS Saskatoon, Core Neighbourhood Youth Coop, Indian and Métis Friendship Centre and the John Howard Society, Friendship Inn.
- Youth received up to \$20 for their time to complete the survey and testing.
- 68% (90) of the study participants were male; ninety-two percent (120) were Aboriginal.**

Next steps?

- Results will be shared with youth groups and participating community based organizations early in 2011.
- Dissemination of ESYS results will include digital stories and other creative media.

What did the ESYS Saskatoon study find in 2009 compared to 2005?

Selected characteristics		2009 (n=131)	2005 (n=185)
Demographics	Aboriginal ethnicity	92% (120)	95% (175)
	Male participants	68% (90)	56% (103)
Homelessness	Not having a place to sleep	36% (47)	55% (101)
Education	Dropped out or expelled	41% (54)	43% (79)
Justice	History of incarceration	79% (104)	66%(122)
STI & Sexual risk	History of STI	Chlamydia 23% (30) Gonorrhea 10% (13)	STI (all) 35% (64)
	Tested positive for Chlamydia	5% (6)	16% (30)
	Did not use condom at last encounter	23% (30)	40% (74)
Injection Drug Use	Injection drug use ¹	33% (43)	36% (53)
	Injection drug use, and no condom ²	34% (13)	50% (27)
Health	Tested positive for HIV	5% (6)	4% (6)
	Tested positive for Hepatitis C Virus	17%(22)	15% (27)

¹Calculated as the proportion of all persons who had tried injection drug use one or more times

²Calculated as the proportion of all persons who did not use a condom at last sexual encounter out of the total who had used injection drugs more than once

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