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91 Percent of Polled Americans Believe Dealing with the Problem of Youth Homeless Is Important

WASHINGTON, D.C. (March 11, 2019) – Recently, the National Network for Youth and Street Child United USA partnered with Ipsos, a global market research and consulting firm to poll 1,005 adults above the age of 18 on youth homelessness issues. We are highlighting some of the results of their findings.

Eighty-eight percent agreed the success of young Americans has a direct impact on the success of their communities. When asked how many of the 35 million young adults between the ages of 18 and 25 in the United States they believe experience homelessness in a given year, 26 percent of respondents answered “Don’t Know” and 23 percent believe that less than 2 million young adults experience homelessness. However, a first of its kind nationally representative study released in fall 2017 showed that around 3.5 million young adults (or 10%) experience some form of homelessness in a given year.

Twenty-six percent of respondents also answered “Don’t Know” when asked how many of the 21 million American youths between the ages 13 and 17 experience homelessness in a year. Twenty-four percent responded correctly that between 500,000 and 1 million youths experience homelessness. These results show that many Americans are unaware of the full extent of youth homelessness in the United States.

Further questions overwhelmingly revealed that approximately 80 percent of those polled believe the federal and state governments should prioritize reducing youth homelessness. About 80 percent also agreed that federal and state governments should prioritize funding for programs that help young homeless people finish high school and find a job.

Over three quarters (79 percent) of polled Americans agreed that young people who can find food and shelter by couch surfing should still be allowed to use public services providing food and shelter.

Poll respondents also appropriately identified risk factors for youth homeless including being involved with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems, being a part of racial, ethnic or sexual minority communities, or being a pregnant or parenting young person.

Respondents support governmental actions to combat youth homelessness. While most Americans may not fully understand the scope of youth and young adult homelessness, they overwhelmingly recognize the importance of supporting young people in need and the government's role to provide assistance.

To view the full results of the polls visit the IPSOS website: <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/Americans-Awareness-of-Youth-Homelessness>.

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