



## 2017 Survey Guide

### General Tips

Each question on the survey was designed to help us better understand more about youth who are experiencing homelessness in Maryland and the challenges they face. Each completed survey has tremendous value in helping us learn how to better address the needs of these youth and prevent future homelessness for youth in Maryland.

While our aim is to collect as many completed surveys as possible, this survey is completely voluntary. No youth should be made to feel guilty for not participating or coerced into providing information they do not feel comfortable sharing. The youth can choose not to take the survey, not to answer any question within the survey, or to stop taking the survey at any time. The youth does not need to answer all questions for their survey to be counted.

This survey is completely confidential. Always respect the youth's privacy and allow them to complete the survey on their own. We recommend providing an envelope to the youth with any paper surveys so the youth can return their responses confidentially in a sealed envelope.

Do not answer survey questions for a youth. If a youth does not understand a question or a given answer choice, you can provide more information to explain what a question or answer choice means, but try to give a simple, appropriate, and judgement-free explanation. If a youth is ever unsure of the answer to the question, you can instruct them to make their best guess. Always be sure the answer to the question is the youth's, not your own interpretation of what the youth may have shared.

### Beginning Suggested Script

Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm working with the [Name of CoC or Implementing Entity] as part of Youth REACH Maryland. Youth REACH Maryland is a project to help us better understand the housing experiences of youth and young adults in Maryland, and how we can better help youth who may not have a stable or safe place to stay at night. To do this, we are surveying youth under 25 so that we can better understand their housing experiences. I would like to ask you a few questions about that. You will receive \_\_\_\_\_ for taking the survey. It usually takes about 10 minutes to complete and your participation is voluntary. All of your answers will remain confidential and we will not share any information specifically about you with anyone. Even though we will keep your answers private, there is a small risk that someone outside of our team might see them. There is also a small risk that you might feel uncomfortable answering some questions. However, you can skip any questions you don't want to answer or stop the survey at any time.

Do you have any questions?

Would you like to participate?



# YOU COUNT<sub>123</sub>



## Question Guide

### Question 1

If the youth has already taken the survey, you can stop at this question. Thank the youth for their willingness to participate and provide them any materials on resources available to them.

If the youth is not sure if they have taken the survey previously, instruct the youth to select “no,” and continue to the next question.

### Questions 2 & 3

If the youth asks why this information is needed, you can explain that this helps us to make sure we are not counting the same person twice, and it will not be used to identify them.

### Question 4

If the youth is 25 or older, you can stop at this question. Thank the youth for their willingness to participate and provide them with any materials or resources available to them.

### Question 5

Youth should select the answer that best describes where they stayed last night. If none of the given answers describe where they stayed, instruct the youth to use the “other” option and to describe where they stayed in the space provided.

To select the first option, the youth does not need to have their name on the lease agreement.

If asking this question at night, youth can select where they are currently spending the night.

### Question 6

If the youth is unsure of how to answer this question, instruct them to make their best guess or select “I don’t know.”

If the youth selected answers in the gray boxes for Question 5 AND Question 6, you can stop at this question. Thank the youth for their willingness to participate and provide them with any materials on resources available to them.

### Question 7

If youth are unsure of how to answer this question, instruct them to make their best guess.

### Question 8

If the youth is not currently in school, they can skip Question 8a.

A vocational training program is training for a specific career or trade, which a youth would typically enroll in after they complete high school or receive their GED.

### Question 9

If the youth is currently in school, they should select what they have most recently completed (for example, if they are a senior in high school, they should select “9-11<sup>th</sup> grade”), except if the youth is currently in college, in which case they should select “some college credits.”



### Questions 10 & 11

If the youth identifies as having more than one race or ethnicity, instruct them to select all that apply to them.

### Question 12 & 13

If the youth expresses discomfort with these questions, you can instruct them to select “prefer not to answer.” As with all questions, youth are not required to answer.

### Question 14

If a youth expresses having a partner who is pregnant, instruct them to select “not applicable” and ask if there is a way we may be able to also survey their partner.

### Question 15

If a youth expresses concern about child protective services, remind them that survey responses are confidential and individual question responses will not be shared.

If a youth is unsure if their children live with them, you can ask them whether they have the primary responsibility for caring for their children on a day-to-day basis. If yes, then the youth should select “yes” for Question 15c.

### Questions 16 – 20

If a youth is unsure as to the answer to any of these questions, instruct them to select “no,” or “don’t know” where available.

### Question 17a

If a youth is unsure at what age they left foster care, ask them to make their best guess.

### Question 21

If a youth is unsure how many times they have moved in the past 2 months, ask them to estimate or make their best guess.

### Question 22

Youth should select all answers that describe where they have spent at least one night in the past two months.

If a youth has stayed somewhere that is not one of the given options, instruct the youth to use the “other” option and to describe where they stayed in the space provided.

To select the first option, the youth does not need to have their name on the lease agreement.

### Question 23

Youth should select both “no” responses if they express feeling that they both chose to leave and were asked to leave.

### Question 24

Youth should select all that apply.



#### Question 25

If a youth is unsure if they received help from a listed service or program, you can provide a brief, judgement-free description of the service or program. If the youth is still unsure, instruct them to select “no.”

#### Question 26

If the youth sometimes received the help they needed, and sometimes did not receive the help they needed, instruct the youth to select “no,” then the youth should select all of the reasons they weren’t able to receive the help they needed for Question 26a.

#### Question 27

Youth should select all that apply.

If a youth expresses concern about indicating that they have participated in illegal activities, remind them that survey responses are confidential and individual question responses will not be shared.

#### Question 28

This question is **only** asked if a youth is **not** taking the survey in a school. If a youth is completing this question, we are looking for enough specificity in the youth’s answer to gain a general sense of their location (e.g. youth should give the specific library name, rather than simply stating ‘library’).

#### Comments

The youth may share any information they would like in this section. If the youth requests guidance, you can share that they can write anything that would help us better understand their situation or important information that we did not ask about in the survey.

### Ending Suggested Script

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey! If you know of others who might be interested in participating you can tell them about [insert magnet event info or contact info for CoC] or tell them to go to [youthreachmd.com](http://youthreachmd.com) for more information on how they can participate.

[provide incentives]

Is there anything we can help you with right now? [provide Need Help? Card, list of resources and/or case management hotline number]

