



SURVEY RESEARCH GROUP

# ***Taking it to the Streets***

***Tracking a cohort of homeless youth  
in Los Angeles***

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# *Background of Project AWARE*

- **We enrolled homeless youth aged 18-25 from two drop-in centers**
  - 100 on Venice Beach (SPY)
  - 100 on Hollywood Boulevard (MFP)
- **We conducted harm reduction groups using Motivational Interviewing over four 16 week cycles for half the sample**
- **Three months later we conducted a follow-up interview (90% RR)**

# *Hollywood vs. Venice*

- **Youth in Hollywood**

- Diverse in ethnicity, higher LGBT presence and many transgendered sex workers
- Youth utilize the local homeless services during the day and stay in squats or temporary shelters

- **Youth in Venice Beach**

- Traveler types, “hobos”, more mobile population
- Congregate in packs and share possessions
- Less diverse in ethnicity, often have dogs and cats
- Sleep on the street, the beach or in vans near the boardwalk

## *Who are the AWARE youth?*

- **Hollywood and Venice youth are significantly different in terms of race**
  - **Demographics (all are means)**

	Venice	Hollywood
Age	22.0%	21.6%
% Male	72.0%	74.0%
% Straight	81.8%	76.8%
% Black	14.4%	39.6%
% White	51.1%	17.6%
% Hispanic	20.0%	33.0%
% Other	14.4%	9.9%

## Who are the AWARE youth? (cont.)

- In both sites substance use is rampant
  - All are means of use in past 90 days

	Venice	Hollywood
Marijuana	86.7%	80.0%
Synthetic Pot	32.0%	28.3%
Crack	7.1%	11.0%
Cocaine	24.2%	19.0%
Heroin	10.1%	11.0%
Methamphetamines	23.2%	30.0%
Ecstasy	29.0%	25.0%
Hallucinogens	49.49% (<.0001)	21.0%
Inhalants	9.0%	13.0%
Rx Drugs	26.0%	21.0%

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## *Preparing for the Challenge*



## *Tracking Form*

- Interviewers completed as a high priority
  - “What’s the best way to find you?”
- We asked for social media pages (Facebook etc.) and permission to message them
- We asked them to list favorite places to hang out.
  - Where do they eat? Sleep? Do laundry? Access the internet?

## *More on Tracking Forms*

- **We made notes about the R's appearance**
  - Race, gender identity
  - Tattoos, scars
  - Height, weight
- **We asked for street names**
- **We made it very clear that we would do everything we could to find them even if they left the area**



## *The \$30 Bill*

- **Project reminder card**
  - Given at baseline and again at every contact
  - Wrote in the date for the next interview
  - Listed the \$30 incentive
  - Had project logo, hotline # and email
- **Emphasized that the card must be put in a safe place and treated like money.**
- **Added an extra small incentive if they called in**

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# *Tracking the Sample*



## ***Making Friends and Allies on the Streets***

- **Homeless youth are very protective of each other and we were able to gain their trust**
  - Word got around that we were “cool”
  - They shared “insider info” with us
- **Became familiar with everything going on**
  - We became familiar with all local services
  - We avoided police and BID patrols on the street
  - Overlooked drug use, sales, sex work
- **We knew about Police and City crackdowns**

# *General Tracking Strategies*

- **We stressed confidentiality at baseline**
- **Many homeless kids are in and out of jail and often wanted by the police**
- **We would meet them where ever they wanted**
- **We tried to build rapport with friends and family members**
  - **They have often been burned**
  - **Key is to remain sympathetic**

# *Tracking Venice & Hollywood Youth*

- **We used contacts with local social service agencies developed over years of projects**
- **Created “Most Wanted” lists to bring to sites of folks we were looking for**
  - **Staff at our two recruitment sites**
  - **Shelters, other drop-in centers**
  - **Medical clinics, food lines and food pantries**

# *Tracking Venice Vs. Hollywood Youth*

- **Venice**

- Many left within 3 months and had to be completed over the phone
  - 16 completed in 12 different states
  - 6 completed in other California Counties
- Found many on the beach/boardwalk

- **Hollywood**

- Many completed in Jail, needed to have jail access from IRB and from the County
- Staked out squats in Hollywood

## ***Drama/Heartbreaking Stories***

- **Pregnant youth especially in Venice**
  - Girl riding the train
  - Girls receiving housing
  - Way to bond them together
  - Control over another person
- **Violent Crimes**
  - LAPD shooting a youth on the Boardwalk
  - LAPD shooting a youth on Hollywood Blvd
  - Homeless man stabbing a tourist in Hollywood



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# *Results of the Field Efforts*





## *Tracking Results*

- **Youth who attended groups (intervention)**
  - Saw them up to 3 times after baseline for intervention groups
  - Completed 97% of follow-ups
- **Youth who only completed baseline (control)**
  - Only saw them once
  - 9 of the 11 youth we could not find were control (completed 78%)

## *Useful Tracking Websites*

- **Facebook.com**
- **Linkedin.com**
- **National Prison Registry --  
[Vinelink.com/vinelink/initMap.do](http://vinelink.com/vinelink/initMap.do)**
- **L.A. County Jail --  
[http://app4.lasd.org/iic/ajis\\_search.cfm](http://app4.lasd.org/iic/ajis_search.cfm)**
- **Regional County Jails – go to your county sheriff's website.**

## *More Tracking Websites*

[www.radaris.com](http://www.radaris.com)

[www.pipl.com](http://www.pipl.com)

[www.spokeo.com](http://www.spokeo.com)

[www.theultimates.com](http://www.theultimates.com)

[www.whitepages.com](http://www.whitepages.com)

[www.reversephonedirectory.com](http://www.reversephonedirectory.com)

[www.defenselink.mil/faq/pis/PCO4MLTR.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/faq/pis/PCO4MLTR.html)

# *Our Intrepid Field Team*





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***Questions or Comments?***

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