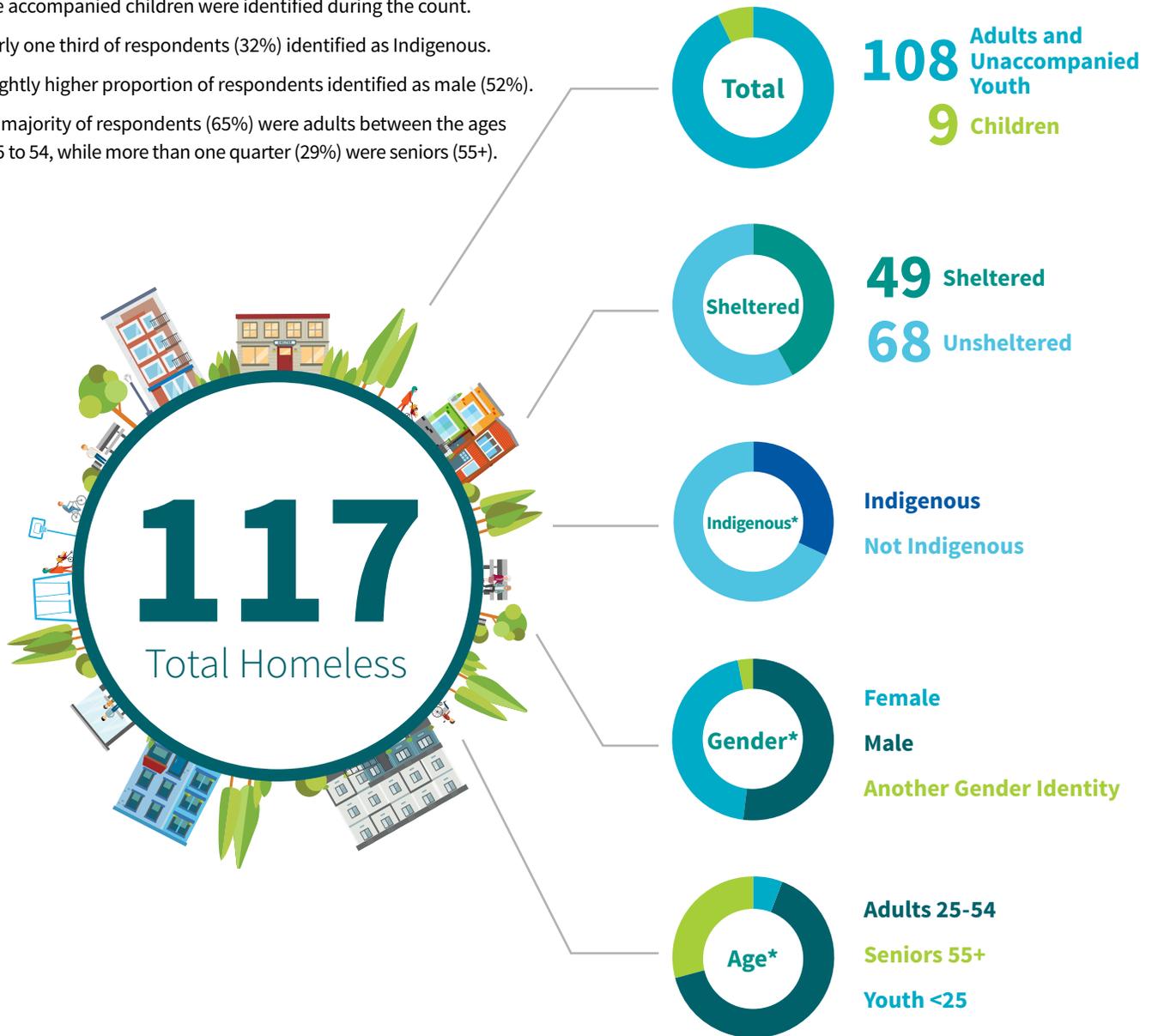


# 2018 Homeless Count in B.C.: Preliminary Data

## Comox Valley

A total of 117 individuals were identified as experiencing homelessness during the count in the Comox Valley on March 7, 2018.

- › More people who identified as experiencing homelessness were unsheltered (58%) than sheltered (42%).
- › Nine accompanied children were identified during the count.
- › Nearly one third of respondents (32%) identified as Indigenous.
- › A slightly higher proportion of respondents identified as male (52%).
- › The majority of respondents (65%) were adults between the ages of 25 to 54, while more than one quarter (29%) were seniors (55+).



\*For gender, age and Indigenous identity, percentages are based on the number of people who answered these questions in the survey. The survey is voluntary and not everyone who identified as homeless answered all questions. Therefore, percentages are based on the number of people who responded to each question (respondents) and not the total number of people identified as experiencing homelessness in the community. Some data with only a few respondents has been suppressed to protect privacy.

# Limitations and Methodological Considerations

Please note the following considerations in reviewing the data in this community profile:

- › For the first time this spring, the Province funded the coordination of homeless counts in 12 communities in B.C. The results will be combined with data from other communities that conducted recent counts, including those funded by the federal government through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. These homeless counts will paint an overall picture of homelessness across the province, inform B.C.'s Homelessness Action Plan, and provide a baseline to measure progress in achieving this Plan.

The data from the 12 communities will provide a benchmark to measure the progress made to address homelessness over time **but does not allow for any current longitudinal comparisons.**

- › For the purpose of the Point-in-Time (PiT) homeless count, we define someone as experiencing homelessness if they **do not have a place of their own where they pay rent and can expect to stay for at least 30 days.** This includes people who:
  - stayed overnight in homeless shelters including transition houses for women fleeing violence and youth safe houses, and people with no fixed address (NFA) staying temporarily in hospitals, jails or detox facilities; and,
  - live outside or stayed temporarily with others (couch surfing) and/or those using homelessness services.
- › PiT homeless counts provide a **24-hour snapshot** of the estimated number of people who are experiencing homelessness in a given community and their demographic characteristics and service needs.
- › During the count, we conduct **surveys** with people who identify as experiencing homelessness. In areas where surveys are not possible, and to support the PiT count, we collect **additional information from shelter operators, hospitals, jails and BC Housing.** Throughout this report,

the term “individual” refers to all people included in the count’s total number and “respondent” refers to those who participated in a survey.

- › **Homeless counts underestimate the number of people who are homeless.** The Point-in-Time (PiT) Count methodology is most effective at counting and surveying the “visible” homeless population.
  - Not everyone experiencing homelessness can be found and not everyone who is found is willing to be surveyed. People who are couch surfing and staying with friends (the “hidden” homeless) are not excluded but are less likely to be counted using a PiT count approach because they are by their very nature “hidden” and more difficult to find.
  - While PiT counts are an accepted methodological tool, the numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are experiencing homelessness on a given day in that community.
  - Numbers provided in this report therefore constitute the **minimum number of people** who were experiencing homelessness on the day of the count in the 12 communities.
- › This community profile includes information about people identified as experiencing homelessness during the count in the 12 B.C. communities who were sheltered and unsheltered and analyzes the data for Indigenous identity, gender and age.
- › A **final report** will be released in the fall of 2018. It will provide a more comprehensive provincial snapshot of homelessness by including data from PiT counts in other communities across the province.

