

# HIGHER EDUCATION – UNLOCKING DEGREES FOR YOUTH IN NEED

---

Shahera Hyatt, Dir.

California Homeless Youth Project

# There Are Homeless College Students?

- In CA, 1 in 10 State University students is experiencing homelessness
- Over 90% of community college faculty and staff see homelessness as a problem on their campus, but only 15% feel capable to respond
- 90% of homeless youth have career goals like becoming a social worker, a nurse, or a teacher, which require extensive education to achieve



# Community College: Basic Needs Unmet

- [\*Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education\*](#)
- 14% of community college students are having an episode of “literal” homelessness (shelter, car, abandoned building, outside)
- 1 in 2 are housing insecure (couch-surfing, inability to pay rent, temporarily housed)
- 30% are experiencing food insecurity in the US, 40% in CA



Photo courtesy of the CA Homeless Youth Project

What kinds of resources are currently at the CCCs, CSUs, and UCs that could support unstably housed students?

# Methods

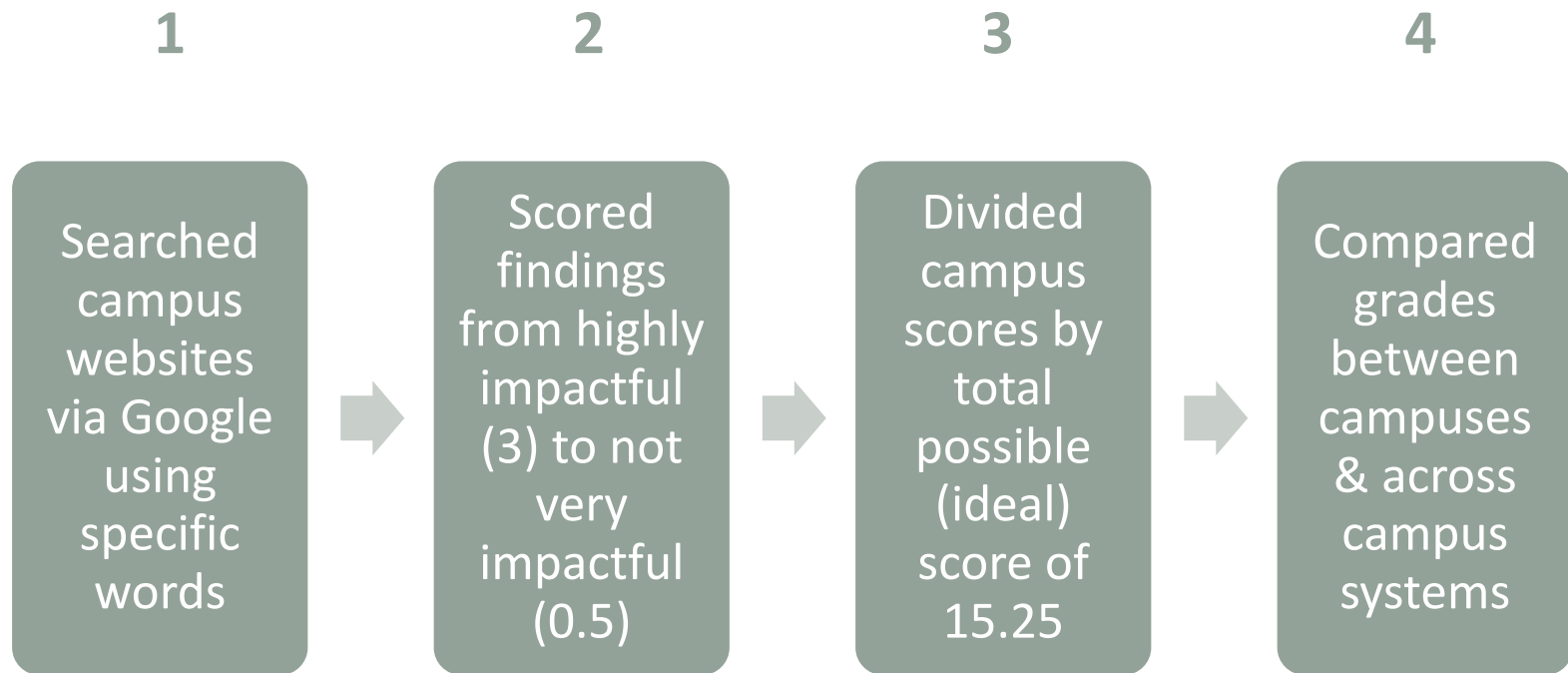
- Measured the presence and affordability of applicable resources at California's public campuses
- Sample size:
  - California Community Colleges (CCCs) – 50 randomly selected
  - California State Universities (CSUs) – all 23
  - Universities of California (UCs) – all 9, UCSF excluded

# Methods & Goals

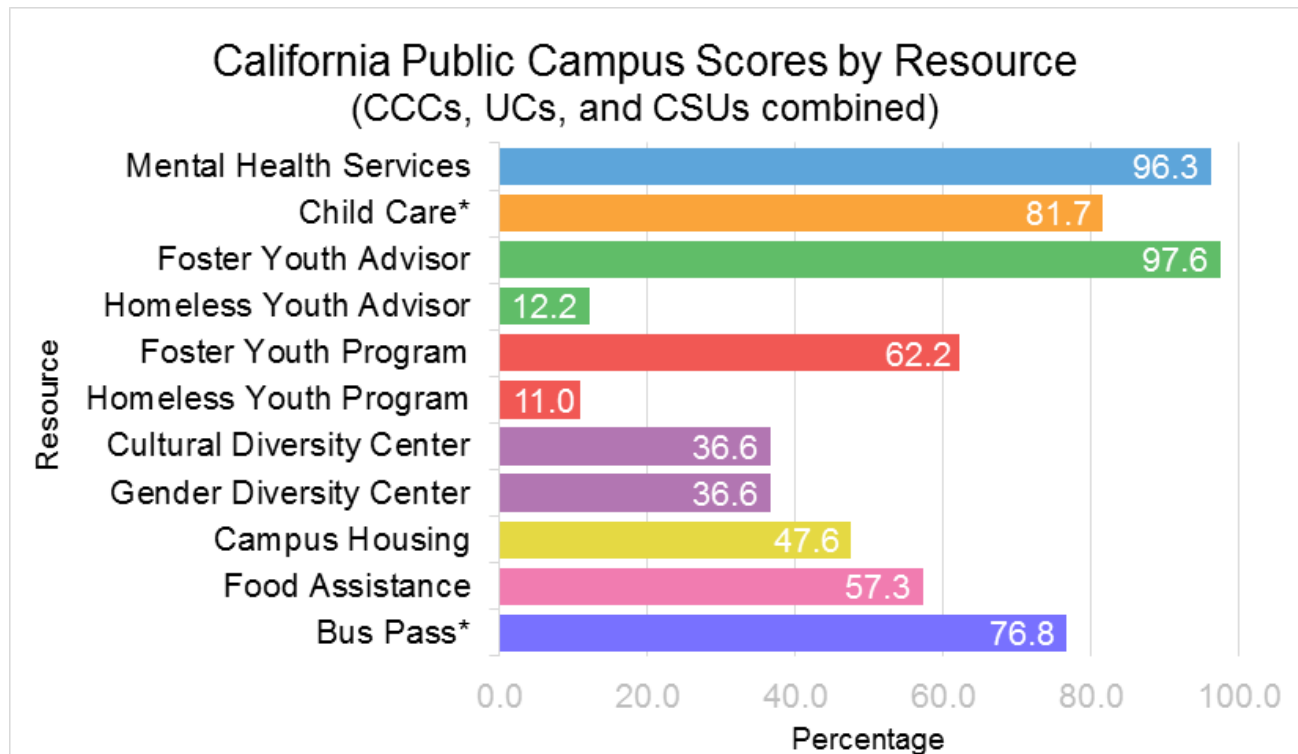
- Resources examined:
  - mental health care
  - child care
  - advisors
  - LGBT centers
  - foster youth programs
  - diversity programs
  - campus housing
  - food assistance
  - public transit



# Methods & Goals

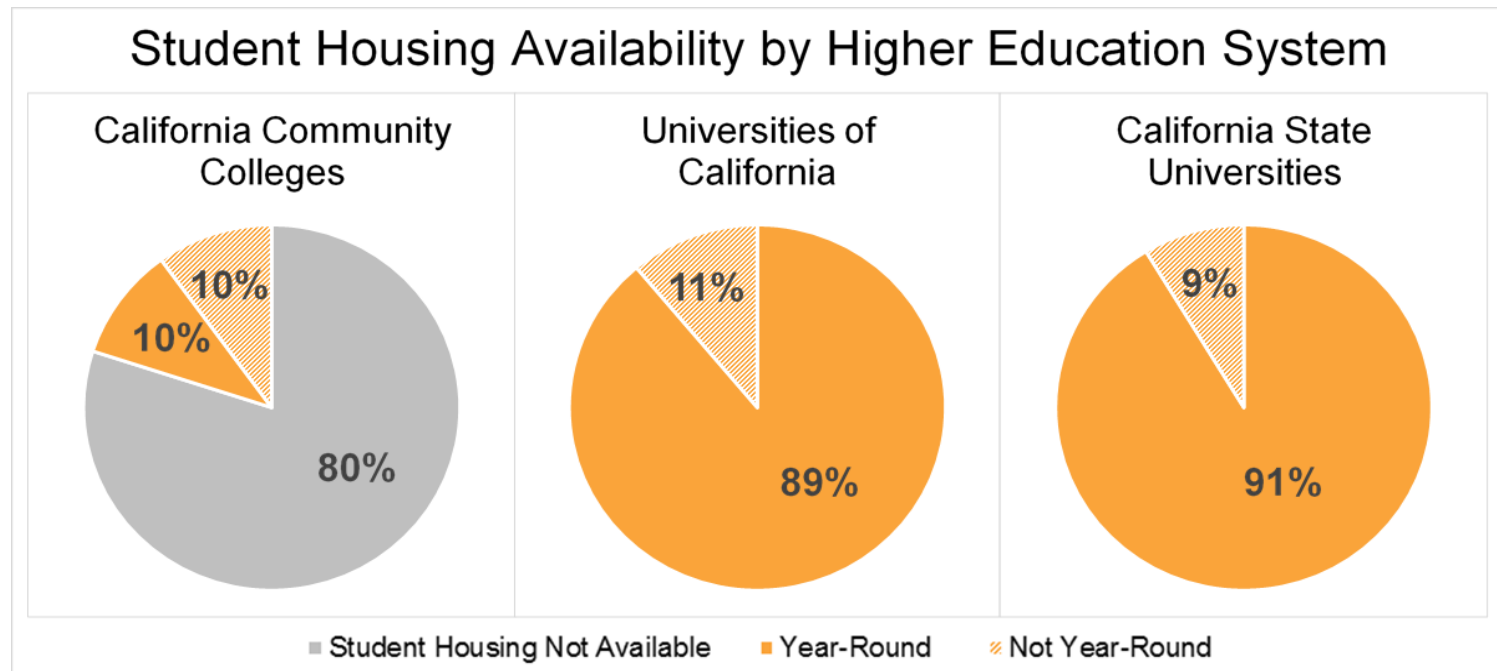


# Findings

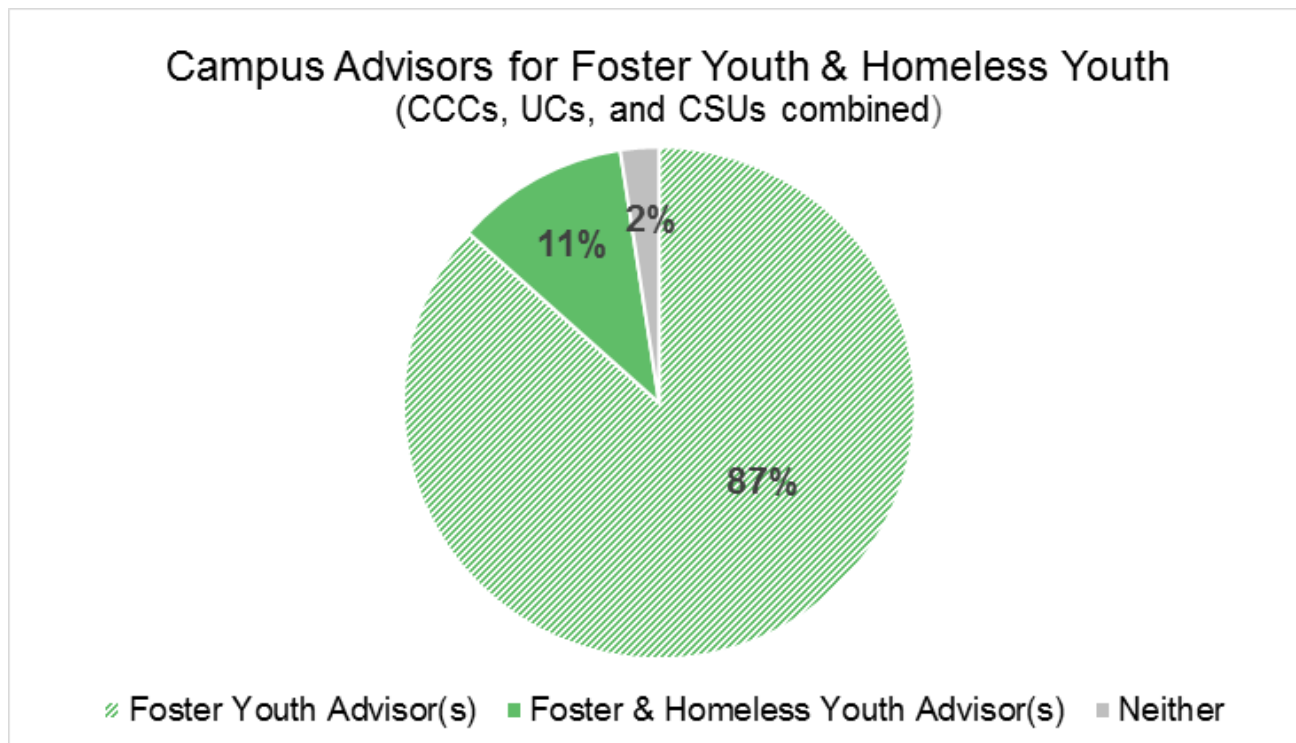




# Findings



# Findings



# Findings

- Mental health & child care services common yet limited
- 57% offer some form of food assistance
- UCs and CSUs offer more resources overall than CCCs
- All UCs and CSUs offer student housing, compared to only 20% of the 50 CCCs examined
- Foster youth advisors and supportive programs common
- Only about 12% of all campuses examined offered advising and supportive programs specifically for homeless students

# Recommendations

## CAMPUSES

- Promptly implement AB 801 - Homeless & Foster Student Liaisons
- Provide the option of year-round student housing
- Expand eligibility of foster youth programs to also include homeless students
- Help low income students enroll in public social service programs when they access related campus resources

# What do young people need to be successful in school?

- Connection to positive, supportive adults
- Stability – difficult to meet educational needs when you can't meet basic needs
- Help navigating financial aid
- Knowledge of existing campus support programs and resources (social media, word of mouth, visibility: posters, flyers)

# New Laws to Support College Students: Food & Housing Insecurity

- AB 801 - Success for Homeless Youth in Higher Education Act (priority enrollment, designated liaisons)
- AB 1228 - Housing priority, housing plans during academic breaks
- AB 1747- College Student Hunger Relief Act
- AB 1840 - State agency hiring preference to students facing homelessness & formerly incarcerated youth



# CSUS - Community Example

- Single Point of Contact (Case Manager)
- Established a new campus task force on housing and food insecurity
- Student Emergency Housing Program: 2 students at a time can live in the residence hall for up to 30 days, meals included
- *“The students aren’t doing anything wrong. It’s just that they’re living in a city that’s hard to afford,” Muñoz says. “When it starts to impact their college plans is when we feel responsibility as a university to help them manage. Some students talk about, ‘It’s either work full time just to survive and live here, or drop out of school.’ ”*

DREAM BIG! WHAT WOULD  
YOU DO TO END  
HOMELESSNESS AMONG  
COLLEGE STUDENTS?

---



# Q & A

- Any questions – ask away!
- Get in touch: [shahera.hyatt@library.ca.gov](mailto:shahera.hyatt@library.ca.gov)
- @CAHomelessYouth