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Big jump in youth living on streets

Enhanced focus on counting this population alone doesn't account for shocking growth in numbers

By Eric Kurhi

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SAN JOSE » The number of kids and young adults living homeless in Silicon Valley skyrocketed in a biennial count, revealing a problem far more prolific than previously known.

Santa Clara County officials and advocates for the homeless said they expected an increase in the overall homeless population and specifically youth in part because there was a major push to count younger people this year. Nearly double the number of workers fanned out in the field for the January count. However, the results, released Friday far exceeded what officials expected: a 185 percent increase over 2015 in the number of people under age 25 who are homeless, nearly double the previous high set in 2011. People under 25 now make up more than one-third of the overall homeless population.

Overall, 7,394 homeless were counted, 838 more than two years ago. Of those 2,530 are either minors unaccompanied by a parent or young adults under 25 years old.

"I had heard rumblings from youth centers that they were see-

SOARING NUMBERS

185%

Increase in number of homeless people under age 25 in Santa Clara County compared with 2015.

7,394

Total number of homeless in Santa Clara County, 838 more than in 2015. More than 2,500 are either minors unaccompanied by a parent or young adults under 25.



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