

An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in San Francisco, showing a dense residential area with multi-story buildings, trees, and a tennis court. The image is used as a background for the presentation slide.

Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative



University of California
San Francisco

Latine Experiences of Homelessness

Findings from the California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness

6/25/2025

Toward Equity: Latine Experiences of Homelessness

Findings from the California Statewide Study
of People Experiencing Homelessness

JUNE 2025

Benioff Homelessness
and Housing Initiative

UCSF

University of California
San Francisco



Webinar Agenda

1. Opening Remarks
2. Findings & Policy Recommendations
3. Audience Q&A



Panelists



Margot Kushel
she/her
Director
*Benioff Homelessness
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Zena Coronado
she/her
Qualitative Research
Project Manager
*Benioff Homelessness
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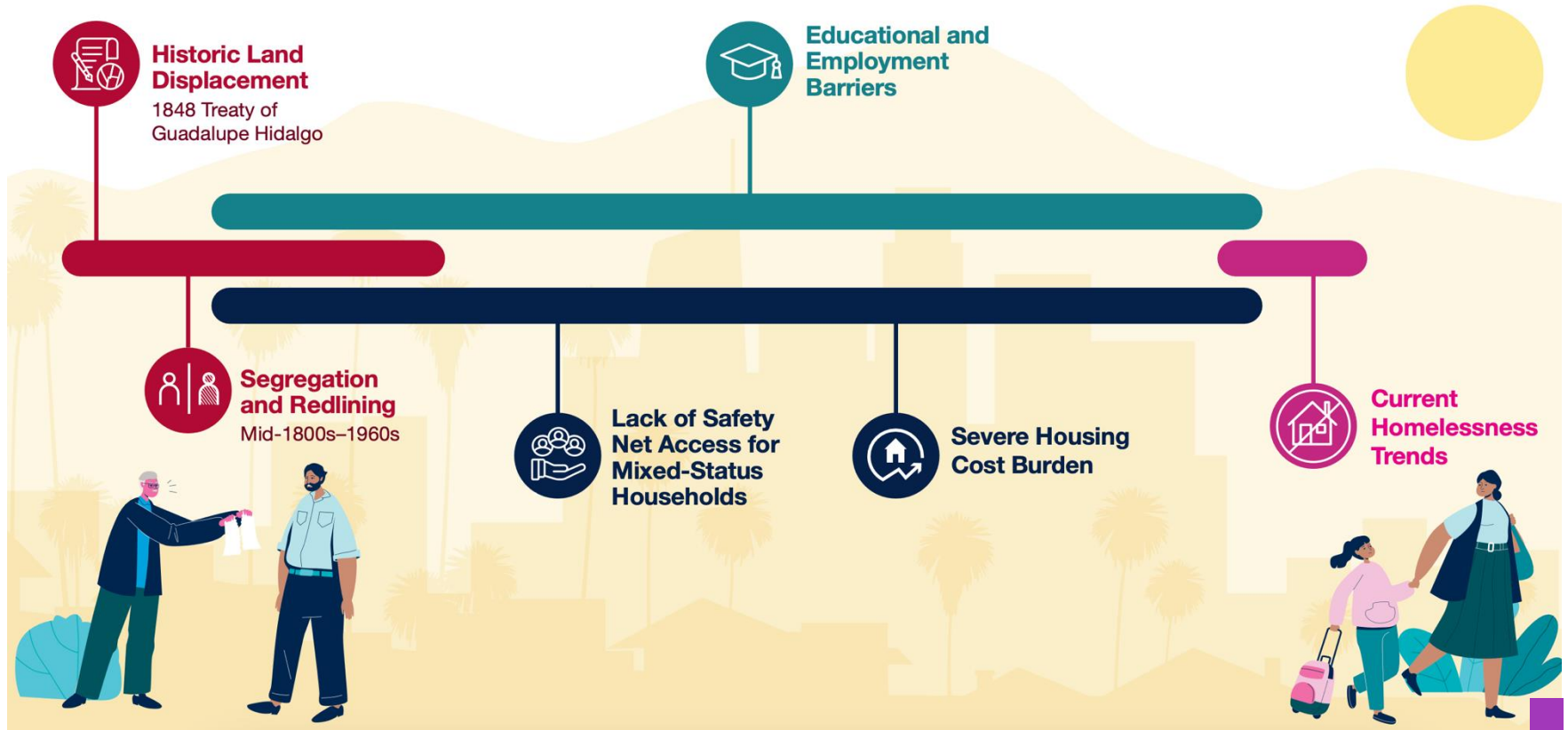
Michelle Cox
she/her
Housing Technician,
City of Roseville;
Board Member
*BHHI Lived Expertise
Advisory Board*



Melissa Chinchilla
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Project Scientist
*David Geffen School of
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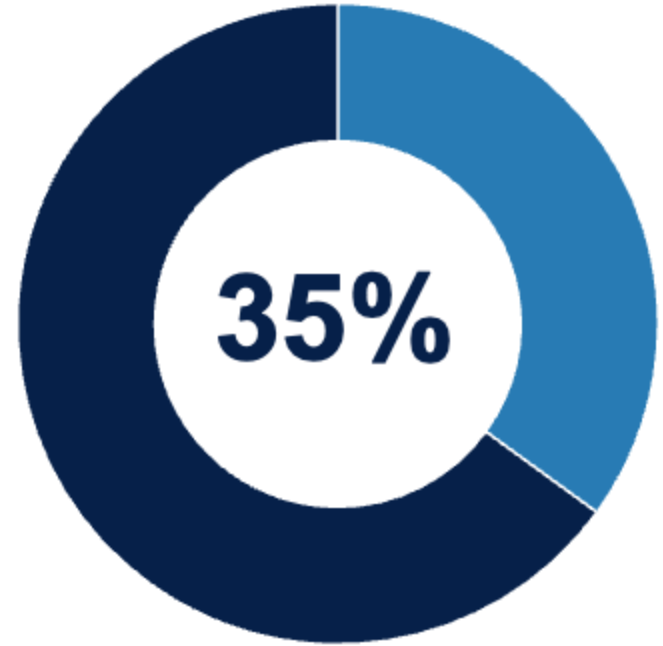


Structural Drivers of Homelessness in Latine Communities



35% of adults experiencing homelessness in CA identified as Latine

- **14%** elected to take the survey in Spanish





**Latine adults were
younger than other
adults experiencing
homelessness**

Median age: 42

62% ages 25-49



- **68%** cis-gender men
- **31%** cis-gender women
- **1%** transgender/non-binary/other gender identified

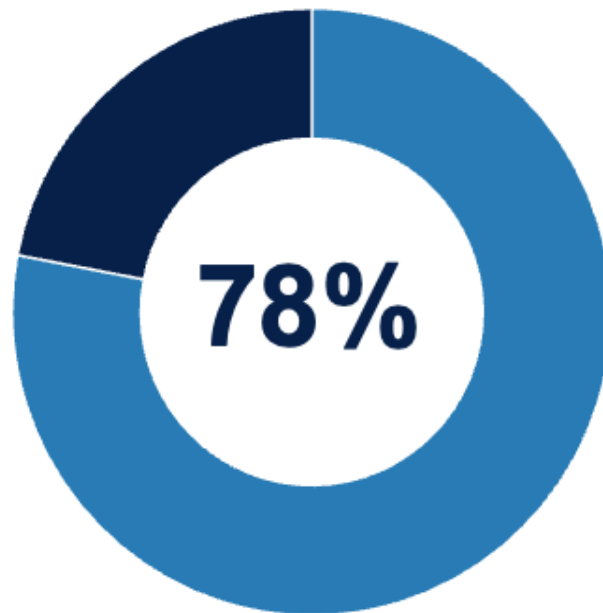


- **85%** single adults
- **12%** adults in families
 - **33%** of single adults and TAY had minor children not living with them
- **3%** transition aged young adults

24% of Latine adults were born outside the United States, a higher proportion than other racial groups

Latine People Experiencing Homelessness in CA are Californians

- **93%** were last housed in California
- **78%** were last housed in their current county



History of homelessness among Latine Californians



48%

of Latine Californians were in their first episode

- Latine Californians who took the survey in Spanish were more likely to be in their first episode (71%) than those who took it in English (44%).

Where were Latine Californians prior to homelessness?

52%

Non-leaseholding arrangements

29%

Leaseholding arrangements

19%

Institutional settings

Income and housing costs prior to homelessness

- All Latine Californians:
 - Median monthly household income: **\$1000**
- Non-leaseholders:
 - Median monthly household income: **\$950**
 - Median monthly housing costs (among those who paid rent): **\$200**
- Leaseholders:
 - Median monthly household income: **\$2000**
 - Median monthly housing costs: **\$600**

Warning Prior to Losing Last Housing

- Median warning before losing housing: **2 days**
 - Non-leaseholders: **1 day**
 - Leaseholders: **3 days**

31% reached out for help prior to losing housing, most commonly from family or friends

Support from familial and social networks

- Relied on **social network** for housing, financial, and other forms of support
- **Not enough** to stave off homelessness, but delayed or interrupted periods of homelessness
- Feelings of **shame** kept some from seeking help from their social networks
- **Culturally prescribed values** relating to stoicism and self-reliance led some to seek housing without assistance





“I'm very closed about what I'm going through. None of my family knows I'm homeless, none of my friends. I just don't want to tell anyone. I want to be able to get out of this alone. **It feels like I'm stuck** in this, and it sucks.”

Where did Latine Californians sleep?

Places slept most often
in the past 6 months

54% outdoors
26% in vehicles
21% in shelters

Photo: Barbara Ries



Fluidity between housing status

- Transitioned between temporary stays with family or friends, homeless shelters, and a variety of unsheltered settings
- Stays with family and friends were marked by overcrowded, chaotic, and substandard conditions





“I ask if there is an available place for renting. If everything is occupied, you look for cars to sleep in. And ask the owners to let you sleep in [one] for one night or so. They let you stay one night or something like that, and next morning you must leave, **you can’t stay any longer because they don’t want you there.** So, you leave and look for another place.”



48% reported fair or poor health

63%

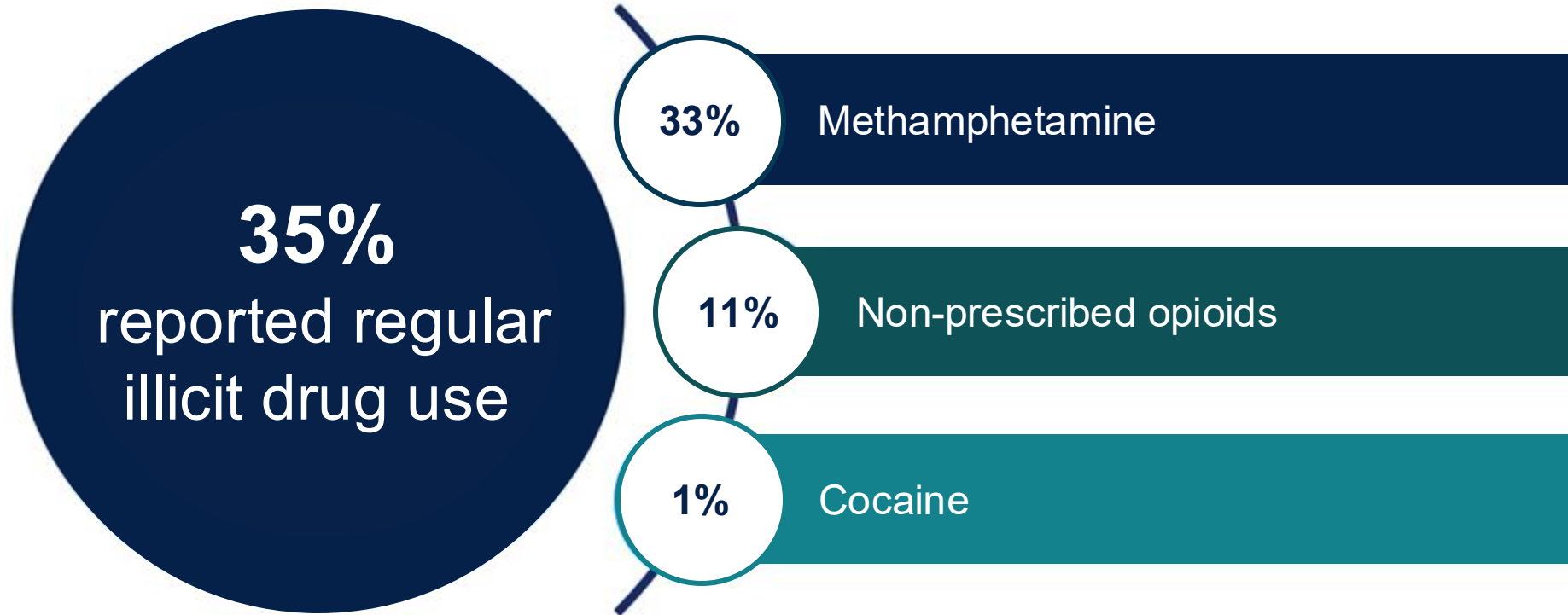
Experienced **mental health symptoms** in the prior month, most commonly depression and anxiety.

5%

Reported a **psychiatric hospitalization** in the prior six months.

11%

Reported experiencing **hallucinations** in the prior month.



11% reported heavy drinking weekly or more often

Complex behavioral health needs were common

51% reported EITHER

- regular illicit drug use
- heavy episodic alcohol use at least weekly
- recent psychiatric hospitalization
- hallucinations



- **35%** had their belongings taken by the police or other government workers in a forced displacement
- **45%** reported being roughed up by the police during this episode of homelessness



81% of Latine Californians reported experiencing discrimination in their daily lives

- Experienced **discrimination** based on ethnic identity when seeking housing or services
- Experienced increased **police harassment** because of their Latine identity
- Discrimination experiences **discouraged** participants from seeking services





“I think [race] has to do with it a little bit... my name says it all... 'I'm [first name] Hernandez.'... That name is so common that – **'That's another Mexican... Let's put them at the end of the line again.'**... That's the type of treatment that I've been getting. Everywhere I go, I'm like this, 'I'm going to go change my name, maybe, you know, Smith.'...It's getting to me where **I don't even try anymore...**Because it's repetitive...”



Latine Californians born **outside** the US

More likely to

- Be an adult in a **homeless family**
- Be in their **first episode** of homelessness
- Have entered homelessness from **non-leaseholder** housing

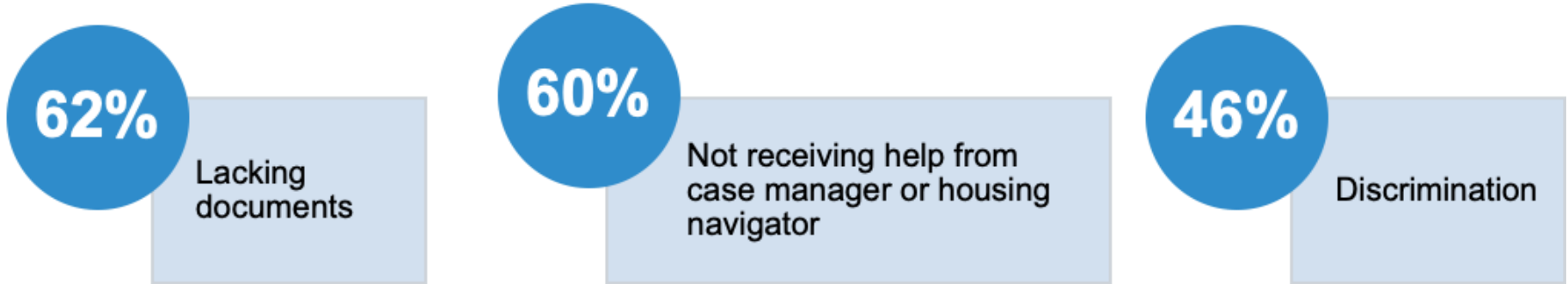
Latine Californians born **outside** the US

Less likely to report

- **Health insurance**
- **Mental health symptoms**
- **Jail stay** during this episode
- **Receiving assistance** from a case manager or housing navigator

91% reported that the high cost was a major barrier to regaining housing

Barriers to Regaining Housing for Latine Californians



Barriers to services and returns to housing

- Challenges [navigating online](#) housing applications
- [Limited English](#) language skills
- [Lack of documentation or citizenship status](#) impeded access to government benefits
- Disconnect between [income and housing costs](#)





“I mean the biggest thing is just like the pay that everybody gets is just – **it's not possible to live off of**. I mean, for me, personally, I have about \$10,000 in savings, which could pay for first/last rent and the deposit. But my monthly income is not enough to maintain a one-bedroom apartment, often not even enough to maintain a studio.”



Policy Recommendations

Partner with **Latine serving** community-based organizations to expand

- Homelessness **prevention**
- **Housing assistance** coupled with workforce development, legal assistance, and anti-discrimination efforts
- **Housing and services** for homeless families, support services for children
- Access to **family reunification services**

Expand culturally tailored programs for Latine populations

- Case management, peer navigation, and peer support
 - Use 1115 waiver
- Behavioral and physical health services
 - In street outreach, shelters, and housing
- Increase Medicaid enrollment
- Full spectrum reproductive health services
- Services for survivors of violence

Expand **culturally and linguistically** appropriate

- Substance use treatment
- Harm reduction services
- Mental health services



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CASPEH
Latine Californians'
Report



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