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## **Teen boys are big threat to homeless community, says national report**

A bumper national survey released late last month cast an appalled eye on **violence experienced by the homeless community**.

Between 1999 and 2013, the National Coalition for the Homeless counted 1,437 violent attacks on homeless people “by housed perpetrators,” meaning they weren’t homeless-on-homeless attacks. But they were man-on-man attacks, with both victims and perpetrators being at least 90 percent male. The coalition also said the attackers were “most commonly” teenage boys.

Over the past 14 years, the report, entitled “**Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Hate Crimes & Violence Committed against the Homeless in 2013**,” chronicled 375 deaths across 47 states, as well as Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C.

California accounted for the largest proportion of these attacks, with 291 of them—or 30 percent—over the 14-year period. The state was home to 33 attacks in 2013, including a disputed September incident in which three young men reportedly set fire to a sleeping homeless veteran in Los Angeles and reports in April of teenagers in Fresno targeting homeless people with paint guns.

In a news release decrying these figures, Bob Erlenbusch, executive director of the **Sacramento Regional Coalition to End Homelessness**, urged state lawmakers to pass a “homeless bill of rights” and include homelessness as a protected class in hate-crime legislation.

Erlenbusch’s coalition co-authored its own troubling **report on the history of homeless deaths in Sacramento County**.

The National Coalition for the Homeless says it used first-person accounts, information from service providers and cross-checked media reports to compile its data.