

# The Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness

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**Stephen Gaetz**

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

**Melanie Redman**

A Way Home Canada

**Kaitlin Schwan**

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

**David French**

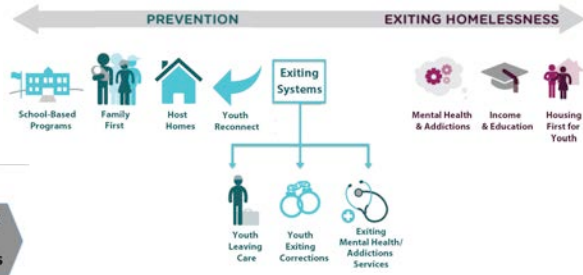
A Way Home Canada



**Canada** 

# Part 1

## The CONTEXT



# A WAY HOME VERS UN CHEZ-SOI CANADA



# ROAD to PREVENTION

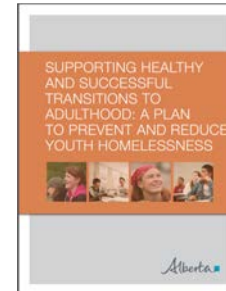


## Youth homelessness Prevention Framework

PREVENTION!



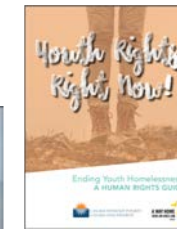
Coming of Age report



Alberta's youth plan



Without a Home



Youth Rights Right Now!



Prevention Framework



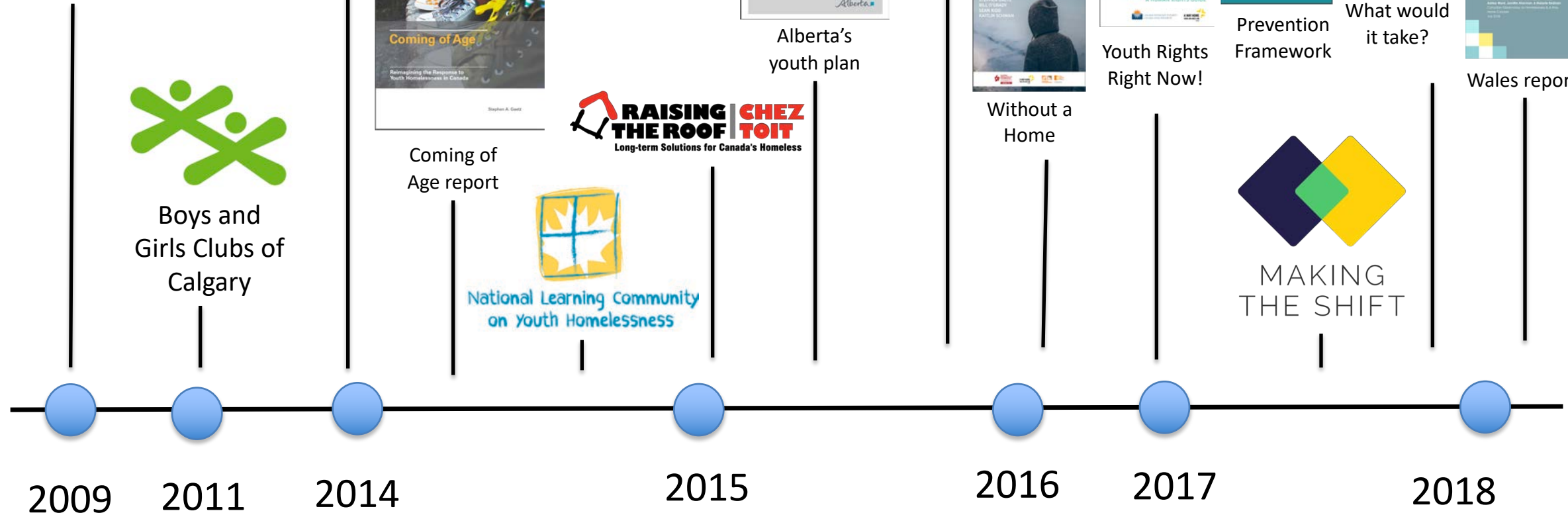
What would it take?



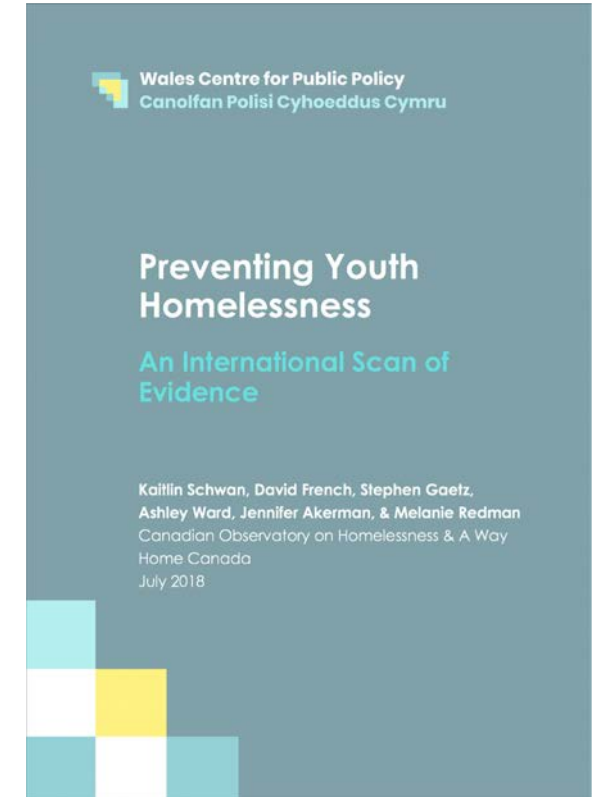
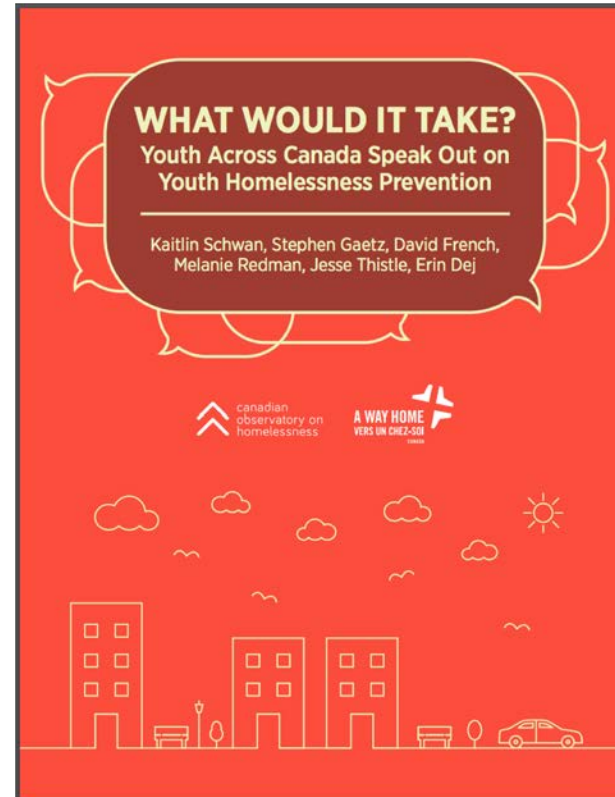
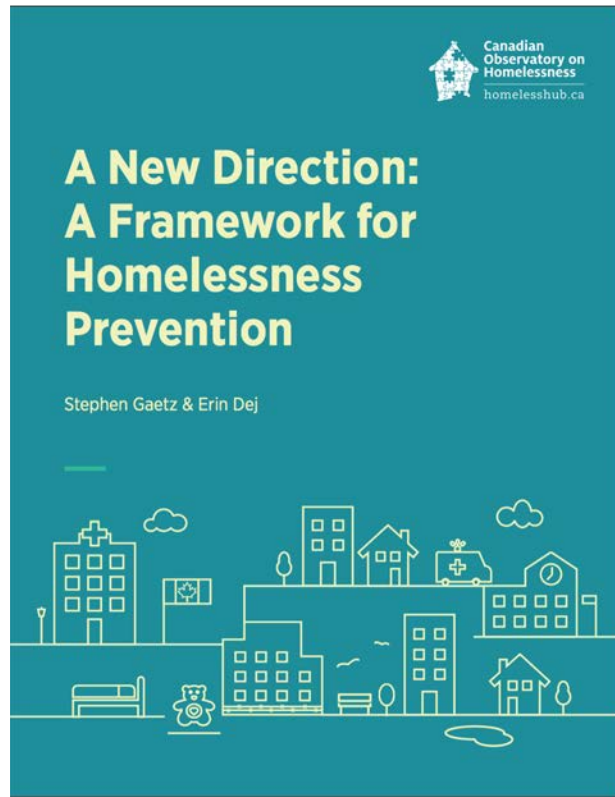
Wales report



Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary



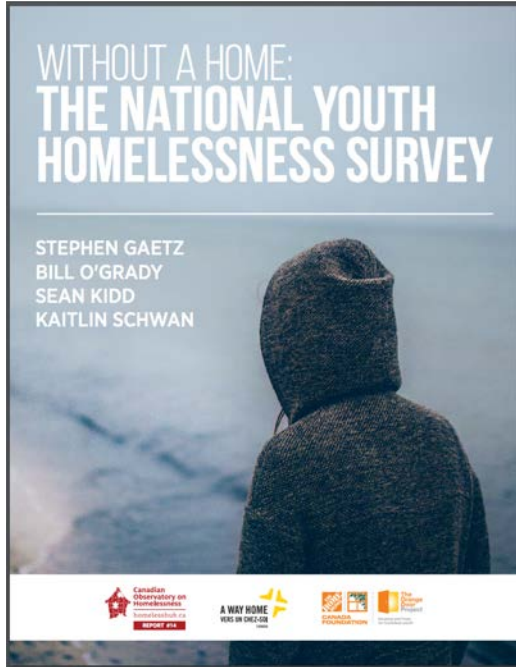
# Doing the ground work





# The Evidence

Survey Results from the  
first **Without a Home** study  
(2016)



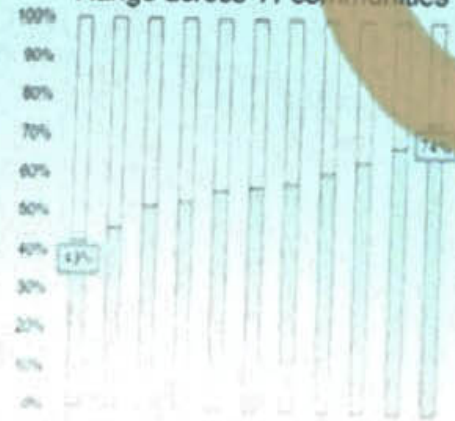
- **Overrepresented minorities:** LGBTQ2S – 29.5%; Indigenous 30.5%; Racialized, 28.5%
- 40.1% had **first experience of homelessness** before the age of 16.
- Homelessness **compromises health and well-being:** 85.4% had significant mental health problems, and 42% reported at least one suicide attempt
- 58% reported previous involvement with **child protection** (compared with 0.3% for housed youth)
- **NEET:** 50.5% not in employment, education or training
- **Criminal Victimization:** Exponentially more likely to be a victim of crime
- Vulnerability to **sex trafficking**

• Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). *Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

## Select Community PiT Results

### First homeless as youth (< 25)

Range across 11 communities



- In all but two of eleven communities, a majority of respondents first became homeless as youth under the age of 25 (median = 57% across 11 communities).

- Some also noted that the proportion was still high among older adults and seniors, raising the possibility of a lifetime of insecure housing and homelessness.

## This data points to some important conclusions

**First**, we are waiting too long to intervene.

**Second**, experience of homelessness has a devastating impact on health, safety, mental health and well-being.

**Third**, some young people – Indigenous, LGBTQ2S, newcomer youth – experience additional burden of discrimination and exclusion.

**Fourth**, the emergency response does not prevent or end youth homelessness.

**Fifth**, our public systems are failing to prevent youth homelessness.

**Sixth**, people with lived experience of youth homeless strongly profess the need to shift to prevention.

# Reaching Home

## Canada's Homelessness Strategy



Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development  
Adam Vaughan, Parliamentary Secretary – Housing and Urban Affairs

Announcement of **REACHING HOME** – Canada's new homelessness strategy  
June 11, 2018

Canada

## Part 2

# The *PREVENTION* of Youth Homelessness



# Responding to youth homelessness in Canada



# Where we want to get to ...



# Defining Youth Homelessness Prevention

*Youth homelessness prevention refers to policies, practices, and interventions that either (1) reduce the likelihood that a young person will experience homelessness, or (2) provide youth experiencing homelessness with the necessary supports to stabilize their housing, improve their wellbeing, reintegrate into community, and avoid re-entry into homelessness. Youth homelessness prevention thus necessitates the immediate provision of housing and supports for youth experiencing homelessness, or the immediate protection of housing, with supports, for youth at risk of homelessness. Youth homelessness prevention must be applied using a rights-based approach and address the unique needs of developing adolescents and young adults.*

**What it is *NOT*!**

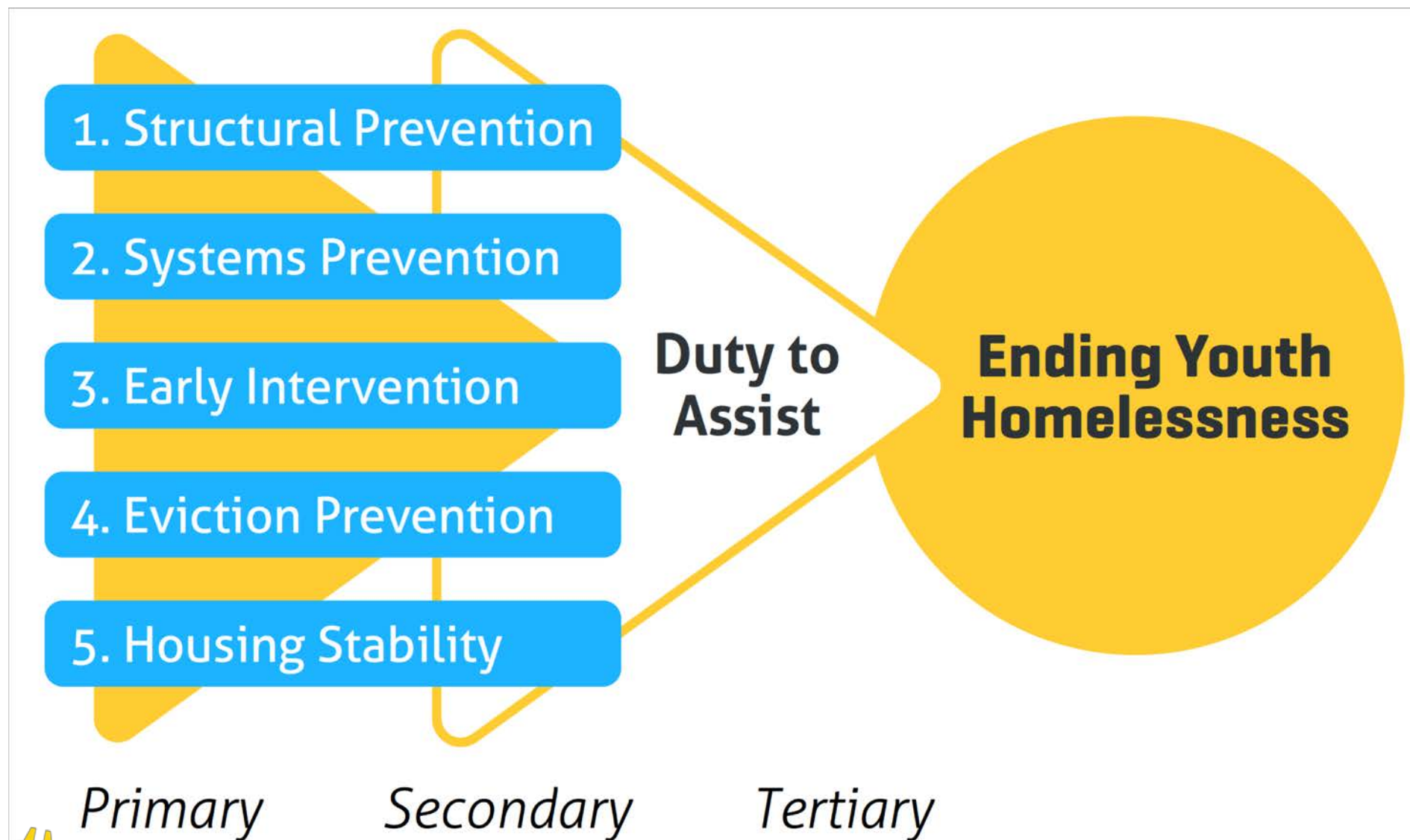
# Prevention as a Fusion Policy issue

**If higher levels of government provide a legislative and policy framework, as well as funding to support homelessness prevention, the homelessness sector and other community-based services will still have a key role in supporting marginalized and socially excluded populations.**





# Typology of Youth Homelessness Prevention



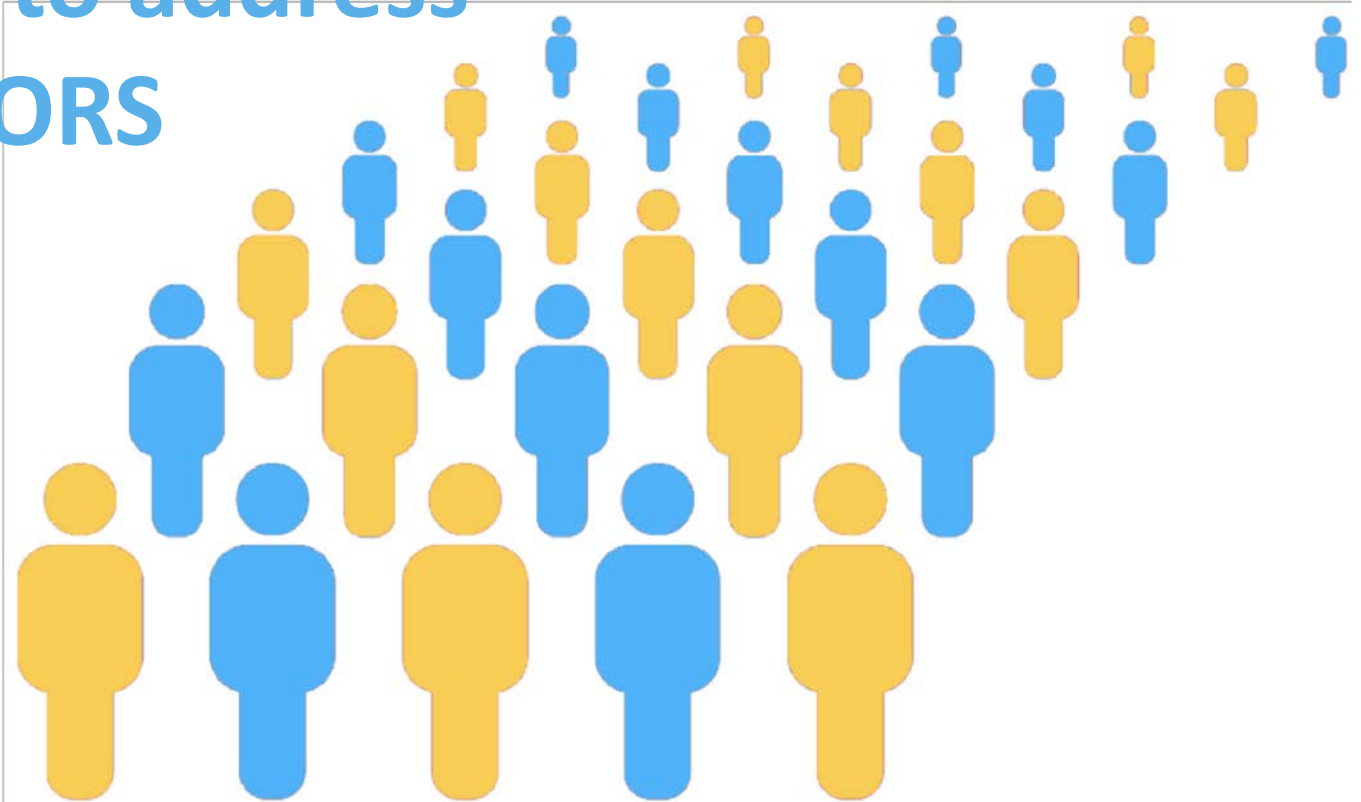


## Structural Prevention:

/ *Working Upstream to  
Address Underlying Causes  
of Youth Homelessness*




Working upstream to address  
**STRUCTURAL FACTORS**






# Structural Prevention

1. Poverty Reduction
2. Increasing the Availability of Affordable Housing
3. Addressing Inequity and Discrimination
4. Structural Prevention of Homelessness for Indigenous Youth
5. Breaking the Link between Youth Homelessness, Migration, and Displacement
6. Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences
7. Promoting Social Inclusion for All Youth
8. Youth Homelessness Prevention Legislation & Policy



**Structural prevention is not the sole responsibility of the homelessness sector, and government investments in community-based homelessness initiatives should not be used to address structural issues that create risk of homelessness. Rather, structural prevention requires public sector innovation and transformation, bold political leadership, and substantial investments in Canada's social safety net.**



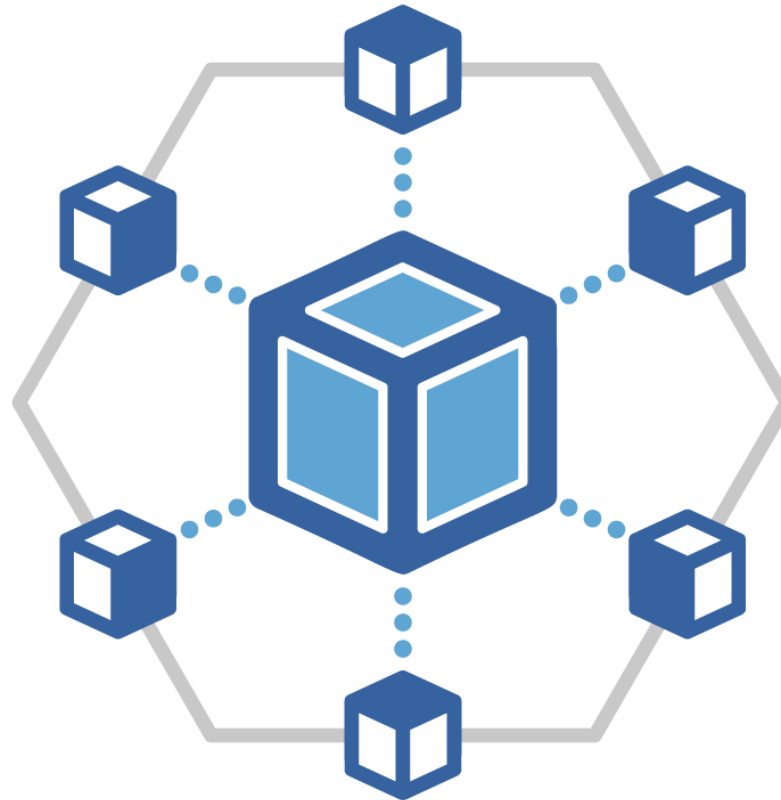
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## Systems Prevention:

*How Public Systems Can  
be Reformed to Prevent  
Youth Homelessness*



## How Public Systems Can be Reformed to Prevent Youth Homelessness





## Systems Prevention:

*How Public Systems Can  
be Reformed to Prevent  
Youth Homelessness*



## How Public Systems Can be Reformed to Prevent Youth Homelessness

Systems prevention of youth homelessness involves identifying and addressing policies, programs, and practices within public systems that create barriers to young people's access to supports, and which expose young people to the risk of homelessness.

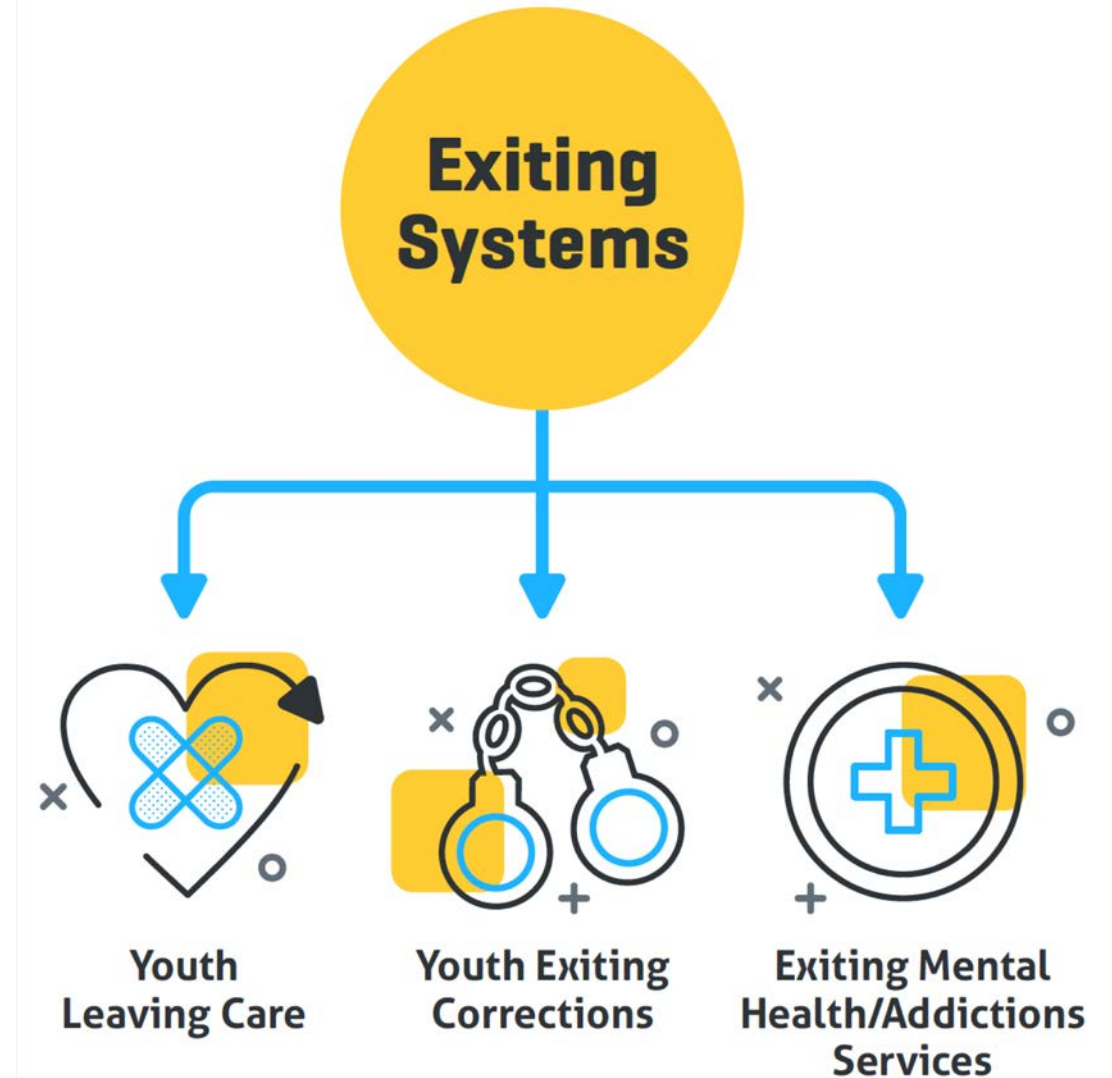
1. Transition Supports for Youth Exiting Public Institutions and Systems
2. Enhancing Youths' Ability to Equitably Access and Benefit from Public Systems, Supports, and Entitlements
3. Improving Youths' Experiences & Outcomes in Public Systems



# a. SYSTEMS PREVENTION



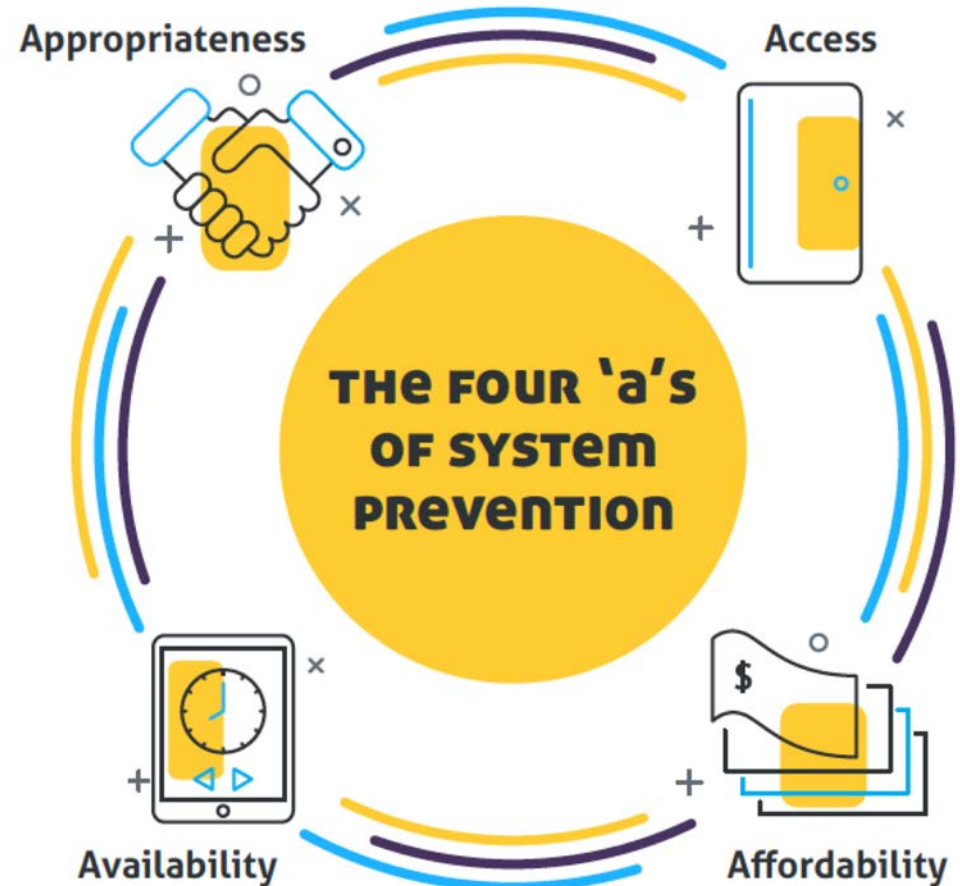
## Transition Supports for Youth Exiting Public Institutions and Systems



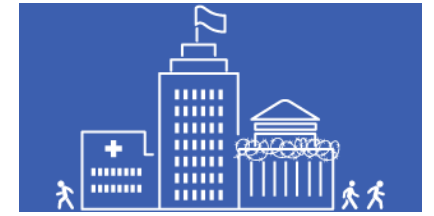
## b. SYSTEMS PREVENTION



**Enhancing Youths' Ability to Equitably Access and Benefit from Public Systems, Supports, and Entitlements**



## c. SYSTEMS PREVENTION



### Improving Youths' Experiences & Outcomes in Public Systems



- Tackling discrimination and inequity in public systems;
- Embedding youth choice, youth voice, and self-determination in public systems;
- Effectively preventing and responding to abuse and neglect in public systems, and;
- Addressing silos and gaps within and between government-funded departments and systems, and also within non-profit sectors.



## Early Intervention:

*Targeted Supports for  
Young People At Risk  
of Homelessness*



**AT RISK OF  
HOMELESSNESS**

**SYSTEM  
of CARE**

- Integrated services, Integrated Systems
- Coordinated entry
- Case management

**PROGRAM  
AREAS**

- Enhancing family and natural supports
- School-based early intervention
- Shelter diversion
- Housing led supports
- Preventing sexual exploitation and trafficking

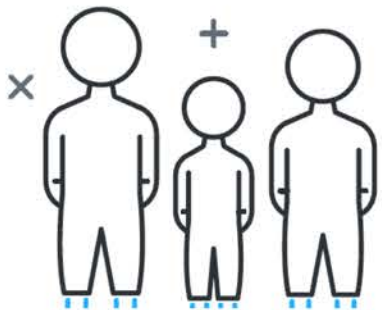
Living With  
Parents or Caregivers

Living  
Independently

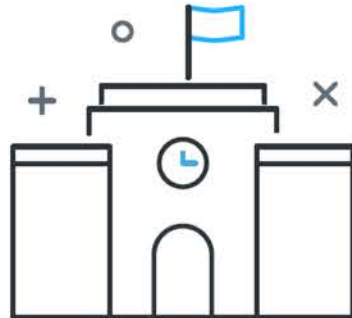


## EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM AREAS

Enhancing **Family**  
& **Natural Supports**



**School-based**  
Early Intervention



**Shelter** Diversion



**Housing-led** Supports



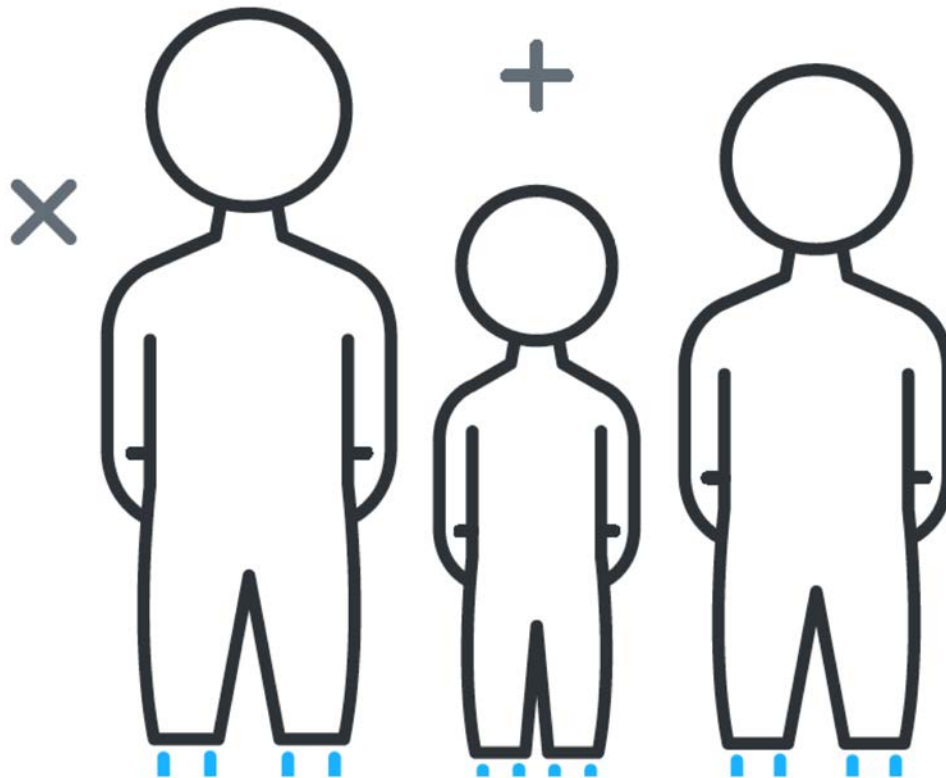
Preventing **Sexual**  
**Exploitation** & **Trafficking**





# 1

## Enhancing Family and Natural Supports

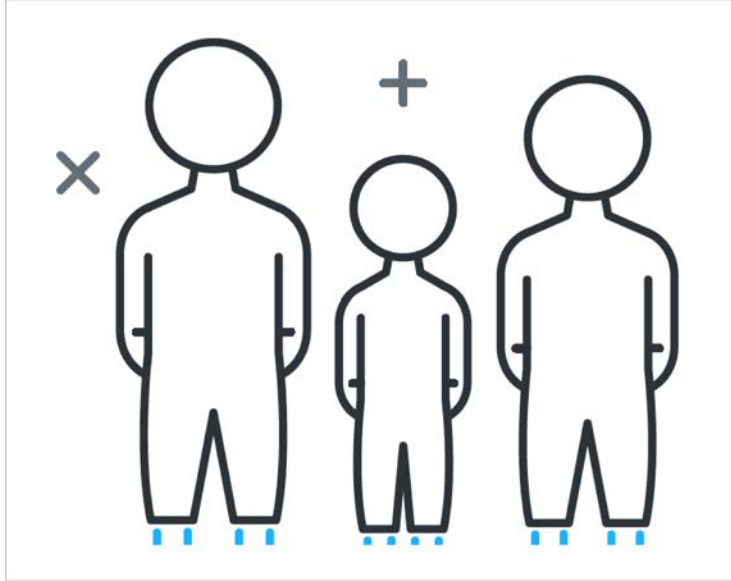


"My trauma led me down a wrong path, and I didn't know that I had ... places where I could go to access help for that. And my family didn't know how to support me with my mental health. So they ended up giving up on me because they didn't know... how. And they didn't have... anyone show them or teach them how to take care of someone with those circumstances."

**Kamloops Youth**







**The underlying ethos of a FNS approach is that family and the support of caring adults is important to almost everyone, can be an asset that enhances young people's quality of life, and gives youth a sense of belonging, identity, security, self-esteem, and someone to rely on when problems emerge.**

# What's Involved?



## Early intervention

- Case management
- Individual counselling
- Family counselling and mediation

## Casework and Counseling

- Case management
- Individual counselling
- Family counselling and mediation

## Assessment

- Mental Health
- Learning Disability

## Group work





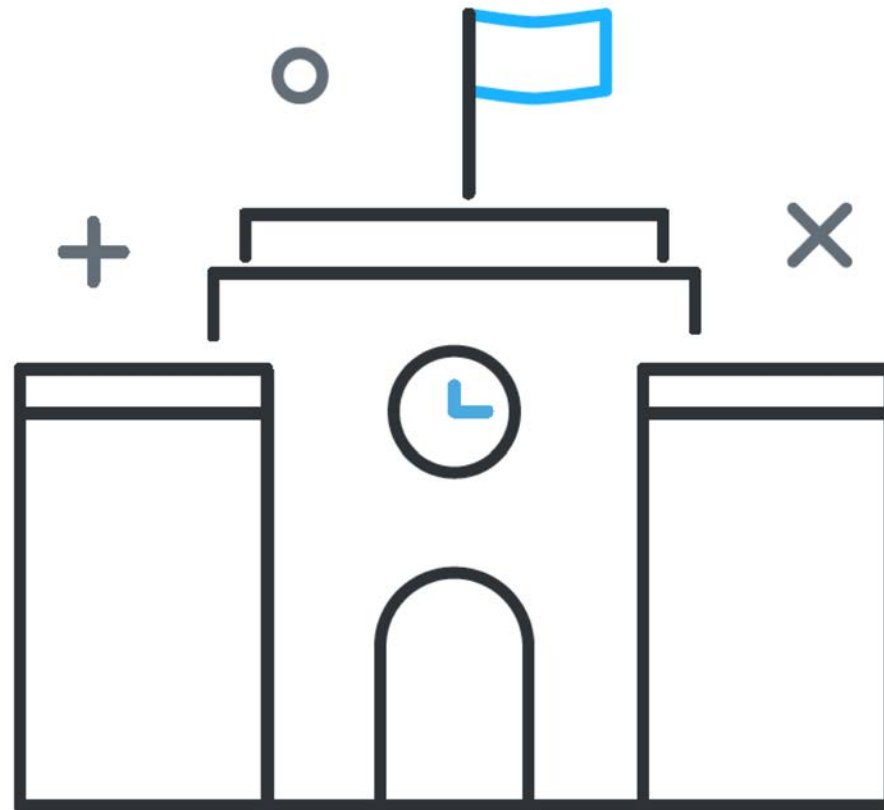
# 2

## SCHOOL-BASED Early Intervention



"Almost everyone has, like, the one teacher that they really trusted and liked, or the one school counsellor that was cool and not scary. So it would be nice if just they got this basic training and also like, signs to look out for. And like, how to approach a student and be like, "hey, you know, how's everything at home, everything going okay?"

**Vancouver Youth**





# Why do **SCHOOLS** matter?





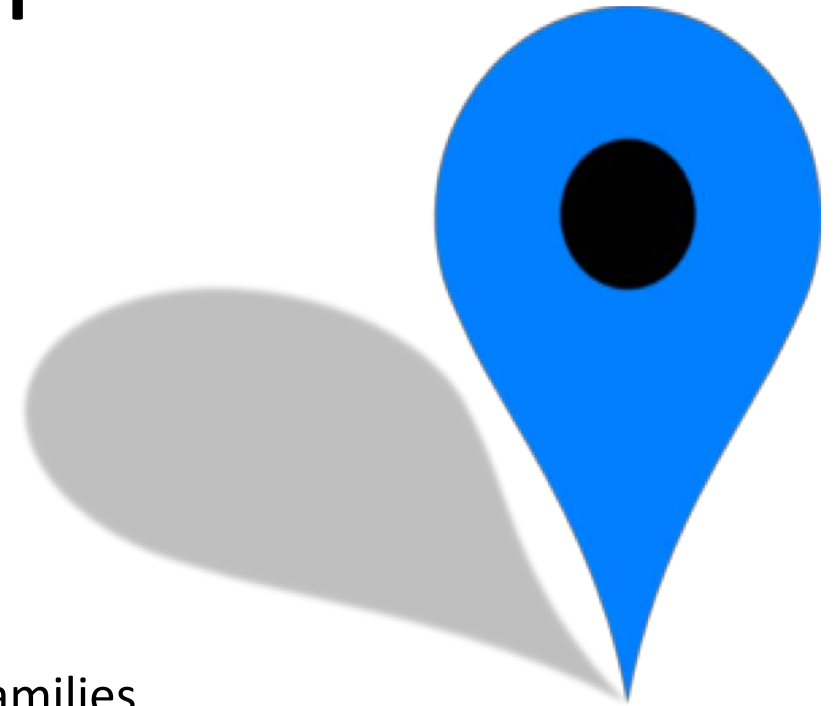
# Youth Reconnect - Keeping young people in place

## Reconnect is an Early Intervention Program

- School / Community partnerships
- Students, teachers and families engaged
- At risk youth identified

### Program goals

- Keeping young people 'in place'
- Stabilizing living situation
- Supporting young people AND their families
- School engagement



# Reconnect in Canada



RAFT's [Youth Reconnect](#) initiative "helps clients' access resources and increases their self-sufficiency, by assisting adolescents to maintain school attendance, secure housing and develop a social safety net in their home community."



Reconnect is an excellent example of an early intervention strategy embedded in an integrated community system of care, working across institutional jurisdictions to provide young people who become homeless or are at risk of homelessness with supports to stay at home, or find alternative supported living arrangements.



# THE UPSTREAM PROJECT

# THE UPSTREAM PROJECT



## Community of Schools and Services

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

'community of schools  
and services'

COSS Model

### EARLY IDENTIFICATION

'population screening'

AIAD - Australian Index of  
Adolescent Development



### LONGITUDINAL OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT

- reduced family conflict  
and homelessness
- reduced early school leaving

### PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

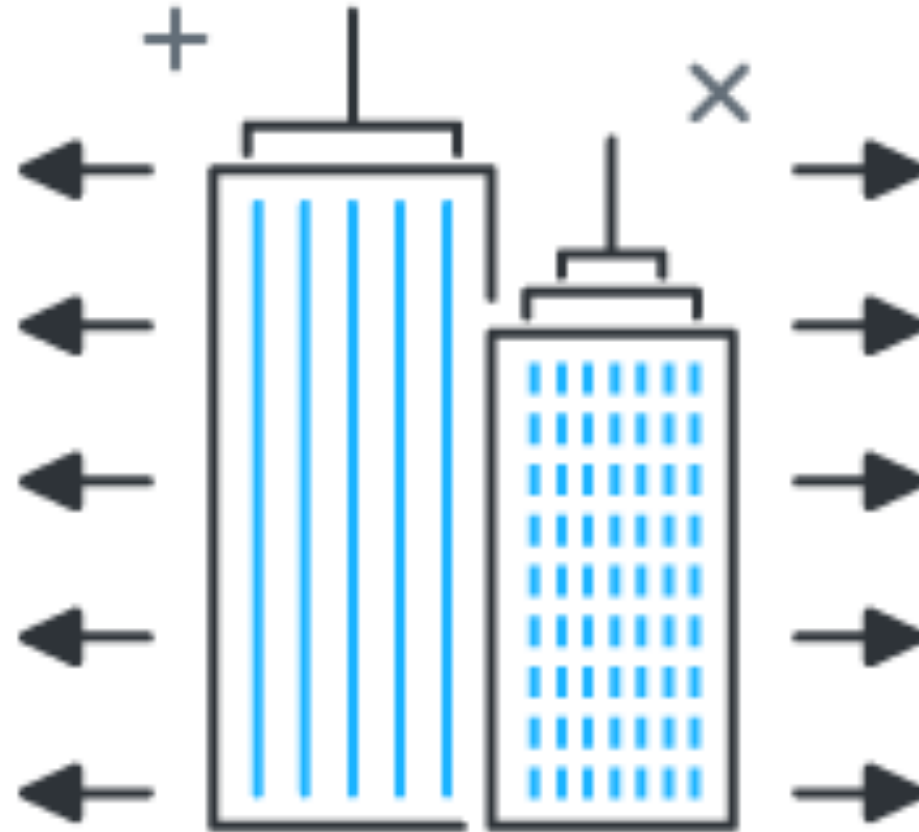
- multi-tiered
- flexible
- dynamic over time





# 3

## Shelter Diversion





# Shelter Diversion

Shelter diversion refers to efforts that support young people and their families in order to reduce the likelihood that youth will need to stay in emergency shelters. This means redefining the very role of such shelters.

- Ensure that all people who come into contact with the homelessness sector are assessed and provided with supports to either return home or move into housing with appropriate supports as quickly as possible;
- Adopt a client-centered case management approach for individuals and families that enter the system, and ensure they are tracked as they navigate their way out of the system;
- Fund and reward service providers for focusing on prevention and rapid rehousing as a service priority, and make the goal of emergency services a shorter experience of homelessness, and;
- Ensure systems of care are in place so shelter providers are able to implement successful diversion programs.

# 4 Housing-Led supports





# Housing-Led supports



## Host Homes

Point Source Youth recently released its [Host Homes Handbook](#), an excellent and extensive resource that includes information on how to set a program up, the host and youth application process, training, and a budget template.



RAPID RE-HOUSING  
**RRH**

# 5

## Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking







**Sex trafficking is a specific form of sexual exploitation that falls under the umbrella of human trafficking, defined by the United Nations as:**

*"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person" (United Nations, 2000, p.1).*

# Critical Components of a preventive response



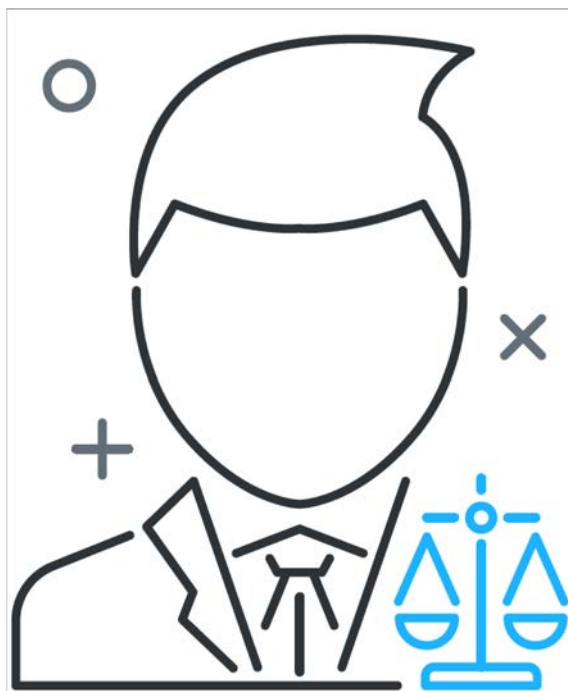
- 1) Youth-serving homeless services and supports should actively seek to prevent sex trafficking recruitment within their spaces and programs;
- 2) Cross-sectoral partnerships and coordination can support a timely and coordinated response.
- 3) Trauma-informed programming, counselling, and services are needed to support young people recovering from experiences of sex trafficking.
- 4) Housing stabilization interventions for youth with histories of sex trafficking involvement should address the unique challenges these young people face.
- 5) Relationships with family and natural supports should be fostered in order to prevent sex trafficking victimization, and to stabilize youth exiting sex trafficking circumstances.
- 6) Upstream preventative actions are needed in order to reduce the prevalence and occurrence of sex trafficking.

# /V Evictions Prevention



"I know years ago when I was looking for, like, market housing... As soon as I said I had income assistance they were like, 'No.' There's such a stigma around it."

Vancouver Youth



**Youth-specific approaches to eviction prevention are needed, *in addition* to broader interventions that aim to prevent eviction and foreclosure for families with children and youth (including youth-led families).**



## IV Evictions Prevention



**There are five forms of eviction prevention that should be part of any youth homelessness prevention strategy:**

- 1) Strengthening Laws and Legislation Protecting Tenants
- 2) Provision of Information and Advice for Youth and Their Families
- 3) Provision of Financial Supports for Tenants
- 4) Access to Legal Supports, Advice, and Representation
- 5) Targeted and Timely Crisis Intervention

V

## Housing Stabilization

*for Youth Who Have  
Exited Homelessness*



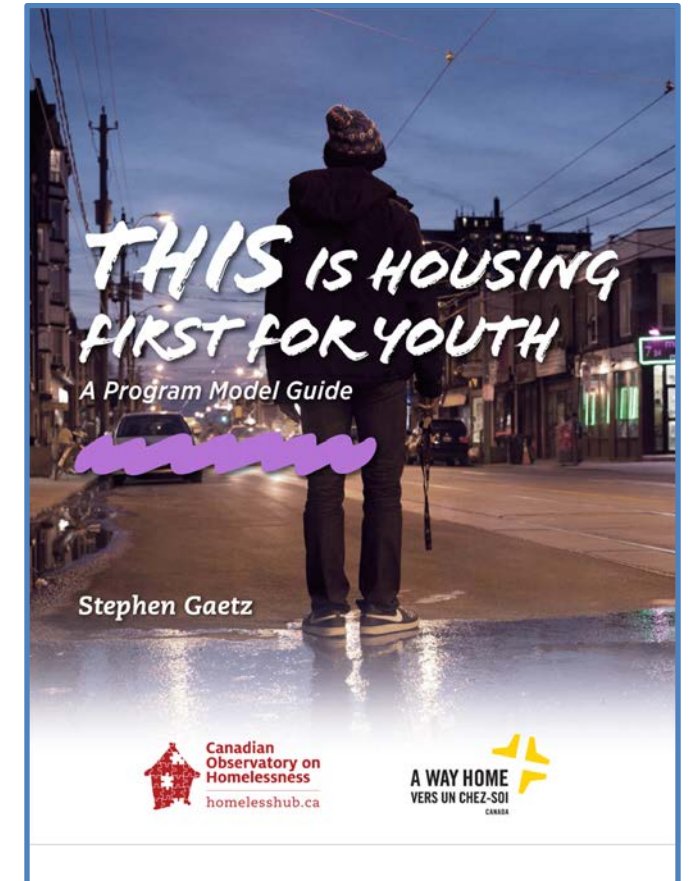


Core principles of **HF4Y** can guide approach to housing stabilization, regardless of the intervention



## *The core principles of HF4Y include:*

1. A right to housing with no preconditions
2. Youth choice, youth voice and self-determination
3. Positive youth development and wellness orientation
4. Individualized, client-driven supports with no time limits
5. Social inclusion and community integration



# Models of Accommodation

(drawn from Housing First for Youth)



# Areas of supports to enhance **HOUSING STABILIZATION**

(drawn from Housing First for Youth)



# Part 3

## ***DUTY to Assist***



# DUTY TO ASSIST

## Taking a Rights-Based Approach



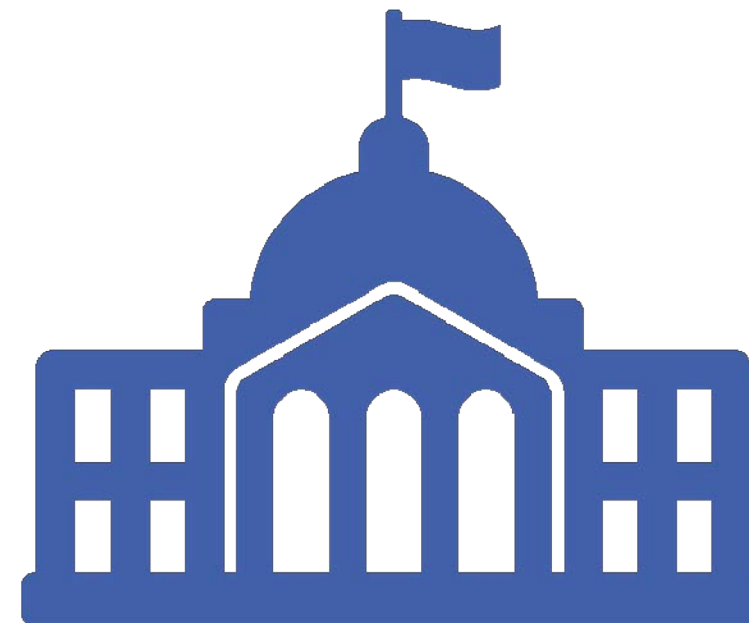
*If the prevention of youth homelessness is to be grounded in a human rights approach, we must consider the positive obligations of governments and communities to ensure the rights of youth are protected. The fulfilment of young people's social and economic rights must include legal and practical mechanisms to seek assistance and redress in the event that their rights are or will soon be violated. Currently, there largely is no protocol or legal requirement to assist youth in distress outside of the child welfare context.*





# A **Statutory Responsibility** to Prevent Youth Homelessness

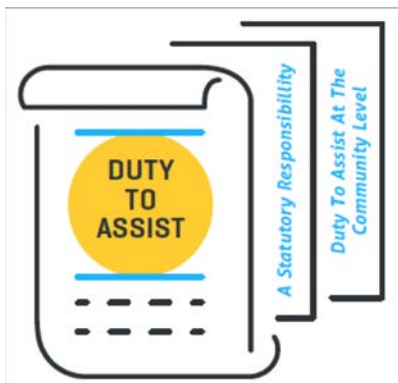
- Legislated requirement, State responsibility
- Retool the sector
- Fund prevention programs
- Promise of assistance to youth (13-25) within 14 days
- Place-based youth-centred



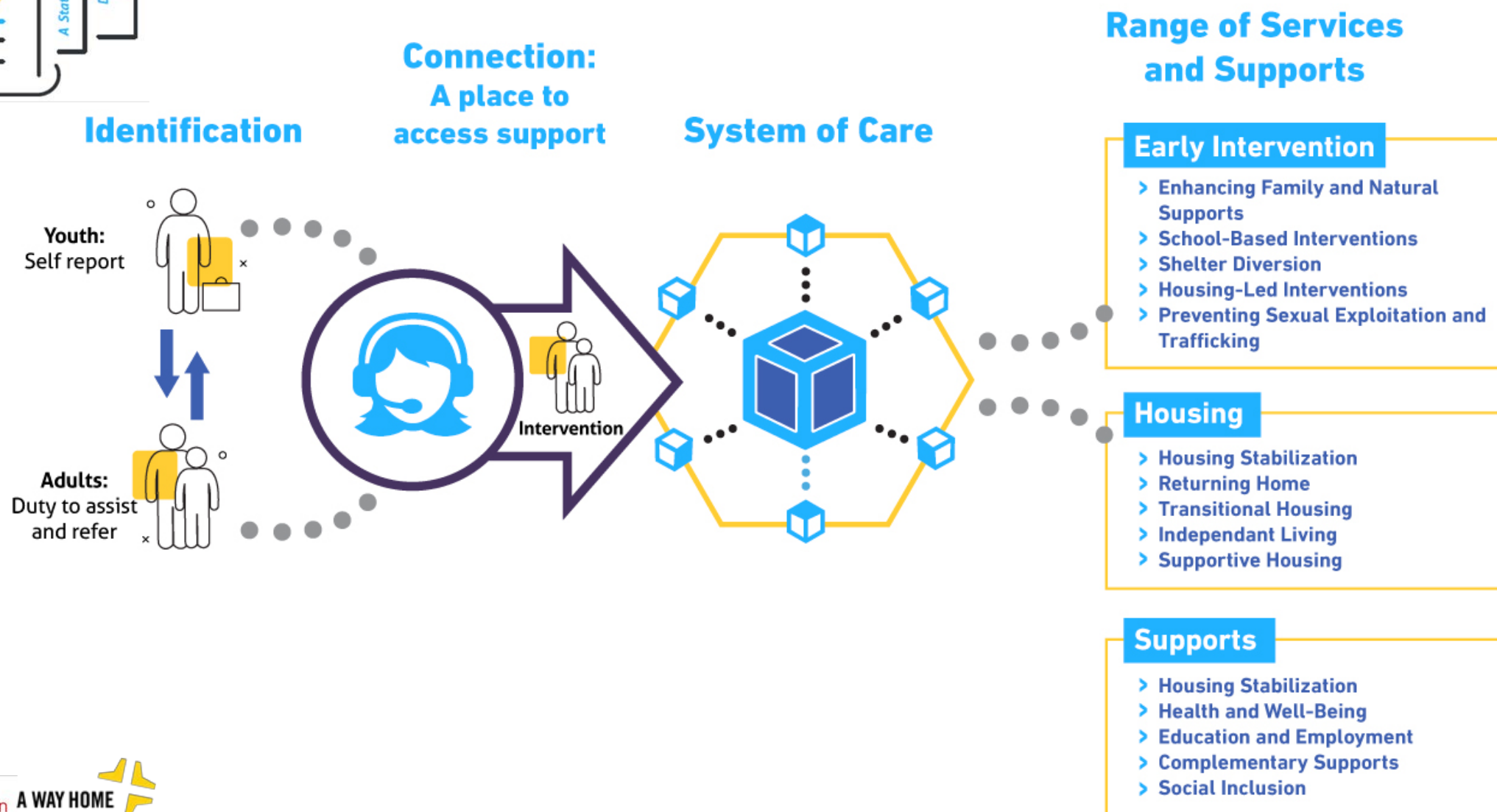


# Community-level supports









A “Duty to Assist” means that communities are provided with necessary resources and supports by higher levels of government to enable them to fulfill the requirement of providing information, advice and assistance to young people under the age of 25 who are at risk of, or are experiencing homelessness.



# How **DUTY to ASSIST** works



## **GETTING READY: What needs to be in place?**

-  **Change Management and the Progressive Realization of a Duty to Assist**
-  **Community systems plans and systems integration**
-  **Retooling the sector**
-  **Investment in early intervention prevention initiatives**
-  **Addressing housing affordability for youth and their families**
-  **Mobilizing mainstream institutional responsibility**
-  **Accommodation for contextual and geographical variation**
-  **Piloting A Duty to Assist**

# Part 4

**How do we get there?**



5

*key*  
**THINGS**  
to  
**consider**



# Its up to all of us!

## Our recommendations are directed at:

- The Government of Canada
- Provinces and Territories
- Provincial/Territorial Ministries & Departments (e.g., Education, Child Welfare, Corrections)
- The Youth Homelessness Sector
- Communities
- Funders

# 1

## Its up to all of us!

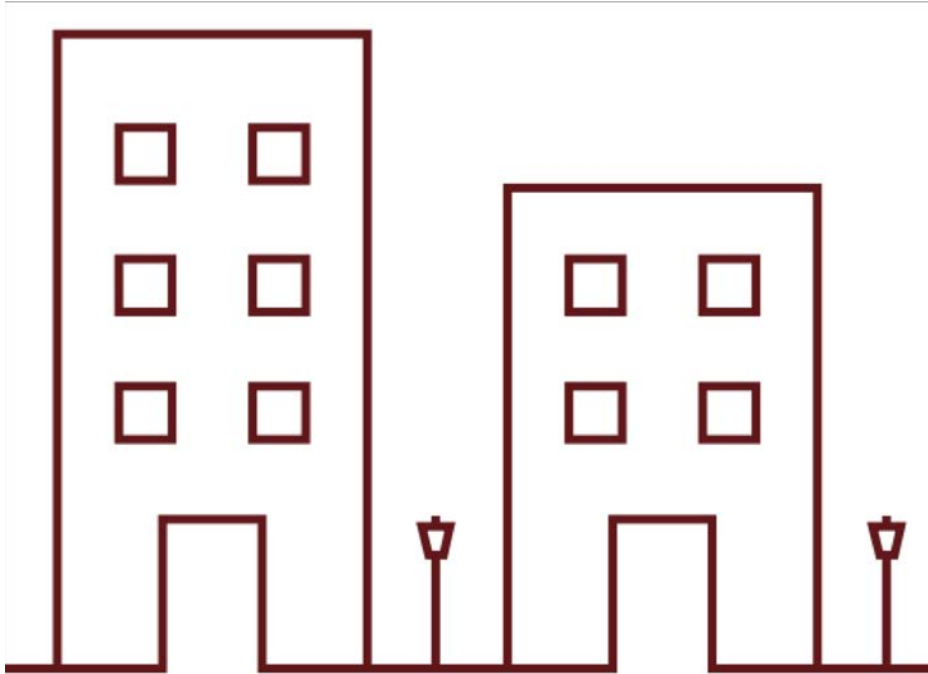
Policy development cycles within provincial/territorial and federal governments are ALWAYS in motion. *The Roadmap* can and should have a direct impact on the policy development cycle.



1

**Its up to all of us!**

## **The Bureaucracy**



# **ENGAGE!**

## **Elected officials**

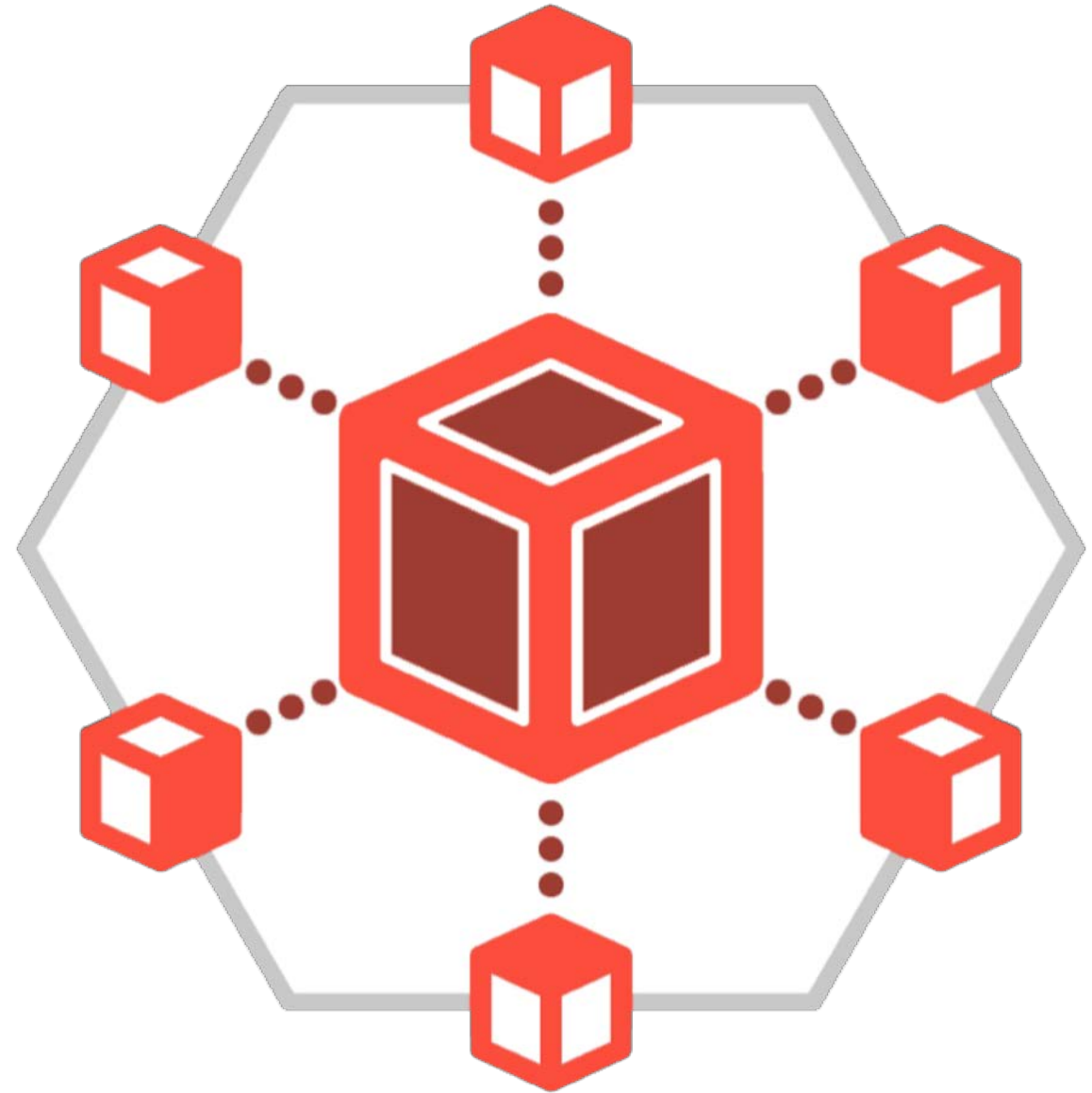


# 2

## Systems Integration

### EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM OF CARE

- Integrated Services, Integrated Systems
- Coordinated Entry
- Case Management





# Success relies on Systems Integration

## Mainstream

### Services

- Health
- Education
- Corrections
- Child protection

### Homelessness

### Service Providers

### Government and Funders

### Unusual Suspects

- Landlords
- Police
- Private Sector
- Lawyers



The diagram features a large brown semi-circle at the bottom. Inside this semi-circle, the words "Service Integration" are written in white. Surrounding the semi-circle are several small brown house icons. Red arrows point from these house icons towards the semi-circle, indicating a flow of integration. The arrows are positioned at various angles around the semi-circle, with some pointing upwards and others downwards.

**Service Integration**

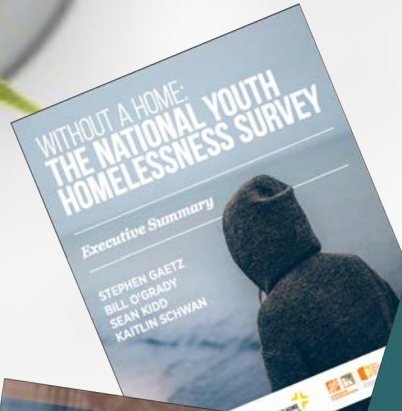


## Systems Planning

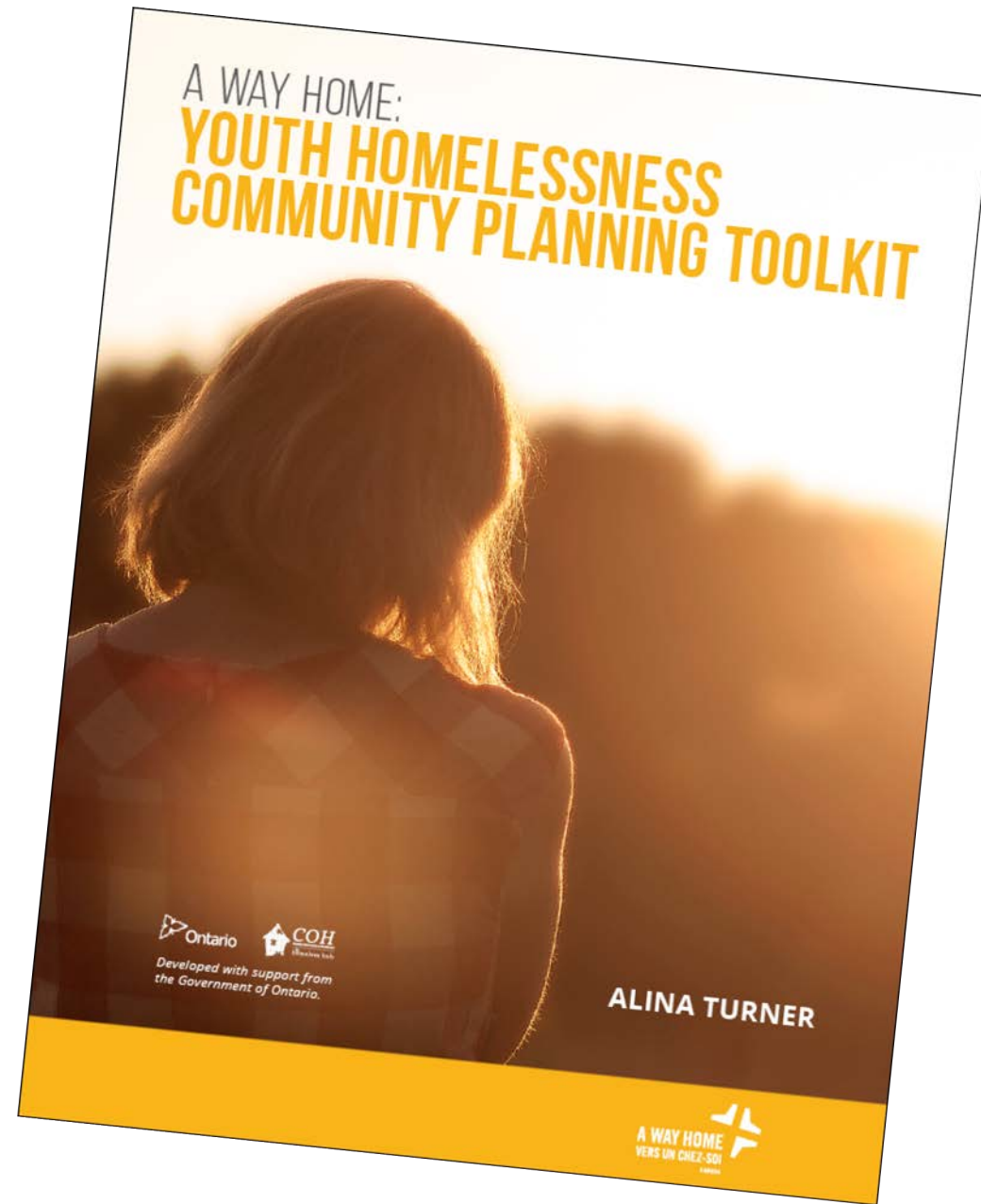


Policy tools

Planning & practice tools



# Community Planning Toolkit







## Lived Experience of Youth Homelessness





# Voices need action!

Youth across Canada were clear:  
*We are waiting too long to  
intervene when a young person  
is at risk of homelessness.*



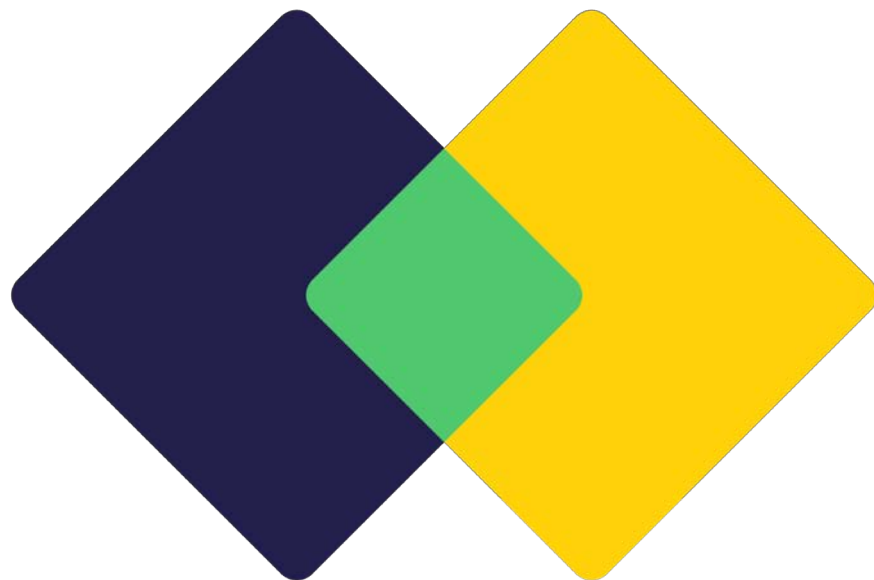
# Take Account of Diversity and Equity



# 5

## Research & Data





# MAKING THE SHIFT

Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab

# Phase 1



## 6 CONCLUSION

Prevention is essential to ending youth homelessness in Canada, and is the collective responsibility of all those directly and indirectly involved in young people's lives.

*The Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness offers policymakers, community organizers, and frontline workers a conceptual framework for prevention, and concrete examples of how to put prevention into practice. This report aims to assist in reimagining our response to youth homelessness in Canada, offering a clear understanding of what youth homelessness prevention is, what it's not, and why it's important.*



# parity

## Call for Expressions of Interest

### Launching Today!

The October 2019 “**Preventing and Sustaining Exits from Youth Homelessness in Canada**” Edition of Parity Call for Expressions of Interest.

If you have further questions or comments, contact **Amanda Buchnea**, Policy and Planning Coordinator at A Way Home Canada: [abuchnea@awayhome.ca](mailto:abuchnea@awayhome.ca)

The Call will close at **11:59pm EST on January 4th, 2019.**

To fill out the form, click the following link or copy it into your web browser:  
<https://goo.gl/forms/U0qYBHsfnr4rzWXi1>



# Questions or Comments?

