



REPORT  
ON

# YOUTH HOMELESSNESS 2021

LET'S END  
YOUTH  
HOMELESSNESS



United Way  
Kingston, Frontenac,  
Lennox and Addington

In 2013, the United Way of KFL&A coordinated a pilot research project on mobilizing capacity to address youth homelessness in a mid-sized community. Embarking on this journey, we recognized that our community needed a targeted, collaborative, collective impact approach – one that focused on **prevention and identifying the root cause of the issue**. At the time, eight years ago, Kingston and area had a higher than average youth homeless percentage (one in three, where the national average was one in five).

The reasons that youth become homeless are different than those of adults, and therefore, the solutions also need to be different in order to meet youth's needs. Often, youth don't realize that they are experiencing homelessness. Some youth have told us they have a home they just can't go back to it.

Framed by the voice of youth with lived experience, with input from front-line service providers, funders and community members, a Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Kingston and Area was developed in 2014. The City of Kingston 10-year plan on housing & homelessness acknowledged that this would be the plan for youth homelessness in the city; rural plans were subsequently initiated for the counties of Frontenac and L&A.

While the title of the initiative focuses on youth homelessness, we know there are many paths that lead to homelessness. The initiative focuses on all issues that could potentially lead to a youth being homeless.

A goal was set and then re-visited. We realized that the end goal was not fewer youth in the system, but that **by 2020, we wanted 80% of youth who enter the homelessness system in KFL&A to maintain their housing, or be housed within 30 days**.

To achieve this goal, the following areas of focus were adopted:

- Prevention: Education & Awareness
- Integrated System of Care
- Housing Options to meet youth needs
- Rural Youth
- Youth Mental Health and addictions

A list of strategies and activities developed at the time is included as Appendix 1 of this document. Progress, updates, reports are produced regularly. More information on progress, data and background can be found in the 2019 report ([Link](#)).

Between 2014 and 2019 we have seen the following progress:

- **14 fewer youth** at the emergency shelter
- **15% increase:** youth completing stay within 10 days or less
- **10% decrease:** youth completing stay between 11-30 days
- **5% decrease:** youth staying 31-60 days
- **4% increase:** youth staying 61-90days
- **5% decrease:** youth staying >90
- **26% decrease:** youth housed upon leaving shelter
- **26% increase:** youth with unknown/less positive outcomes after leaving shelter

Some of the activities were halted in 2020 as a result of the pandemic as agencies and programs adjusted to meet the challenges posed by Covid-19. All agencies adapted – the youth shelter had to move to a new temporary location to allow for isolation and program delivery in all agencies was largely virtual.

**2021 System Review:** In 2021 a full review is being done, complementing the work of the City of Kingston Homelessness and Housing review. Frontline agencies and school boards connected with youth and this input has been captured as Appendix 2. The input was shared with the Youth Homelessness Steering Committee and strategies were confirmed, with some additional areas of focus identified.

# 2021 Strategies to Prevent and End Youth Homeless in KFL&A

**The following updated strategies are being recommended in 2021:**

1. Prevention as a core strategy to increase awareness
2. Integrated system of care, keeping a youth-centred approach
3. Housing options that suit the needs of youth
4. Supporting youth with mental health and addictions

## 1. Prevention as a Core Strategy

**The primary focus of the Youth Homeless plan is prevention.** We continue to hear that prevention is a key element in ending youth homelessness. The community needs to continue to use a prevention lens to address youth homelessness.

An Education & Awareness campaign was introduced, focusing on:

1. Awareness of where to go for youth who were homeless or at-risk of homelessness
2. Helping youth understand what leads to homelessness
3. Removing stigma about youth homelessness in the community.

We worked together on the following:

- An awareness campaign was implemented in schools, agencies and the community, using life size cut-outs of local youth stories.
- A community awareness campaign was started, with speakers at events and transit ads.
- An annual youth summit was organized by youth leaders.
- An annual awareness session was held for educators and school counsellors, providing them with tools and information about local resources.

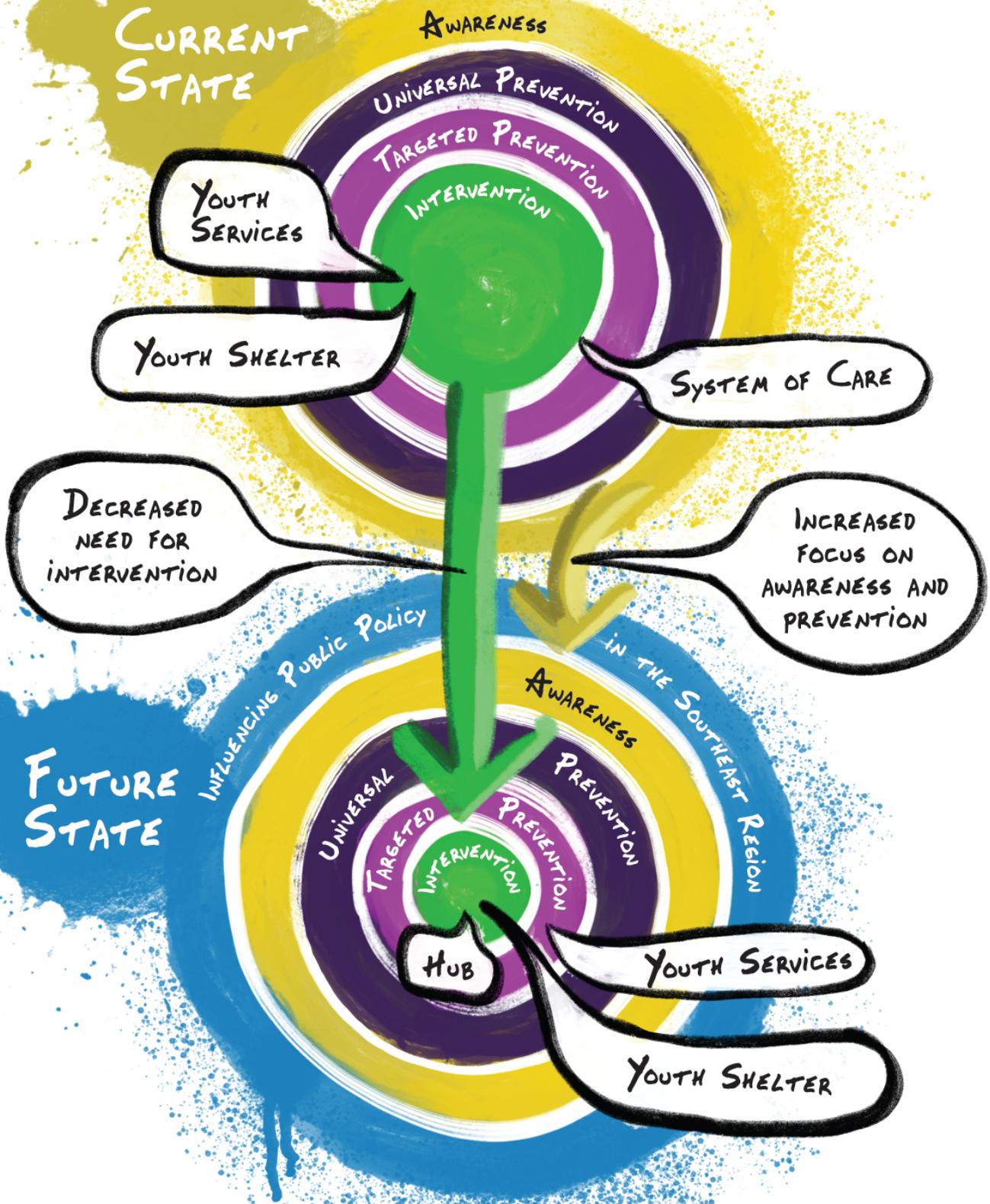
### Recommendations for 2021

- Continue with the education and awareness campaign. Based on conversations with youth with lived experience, this needs to be an area of focus.
- Work with school boards and youth to provide more learning and awareness opportunities in school. This time around youth leaders in high schools will be recruited to provide annual general assembly information sessions as well as focus groups. We believe this will help youth learn more about issues that lead to homelessness.
- Continue learning days for youth and educators, keeping them informed of the issue and resources.

New in 2021, implement an awareness and information campaign for **families** of youth who are at risk of homelessness or who have left home.

- Utilize Parent Teacher information nights at schools.
- Find channels and ways to get information to families about programs like family mediation, addictions, mental health supports.

# ROLE OF PREVENTION



## 2. Integrated System of Care with a Youth-Centred Approach

Working closely with the City of Kingston and agencies serving youth, a coordinated Intake process was undertaken. This included system mapping to identify and close gaps. Youth commented on the need for one centralized place to access information. 211 was promoted as an easy-to-remember number to call 24/7.

Youth Hub was set up – agencies were supported in the creation of a central hub. Core funding for One Roof was provided. The project grew with 27 agencies involved and a new larger location, incorporating clinical support for youth.

A hub was created in L&A. While the L&A Hub physical location in Napanee had to be closed due to the pandemic, the program was made virtual, as was a centralized virtual hub in Sharbot Lake.

### Recommendations for 2021:

- Continue to build on the success of hubs for information, resources, intake.
  - Add family support programs to programs offered at One Roof.
  - Expand information about walk in clinics at Resolve Counselling Centres and Maltby Centre - for families and youth.
- Rural youth: find better ways to connect with the system of care, particularly in the area of addictions.
  - Youth in Frontenac County have higher rates of substance use and addictions than in the city. Work with Youth Diversion and Addiction & Mental Health Services to enhance supports and programs offered through high schools.
- System coordination and mapping: Work with the City of Kingston and L&A County on a coordinated way to provide system oversight and support to agencies working on youth issues.
- Increase information, connection and coordination of programs for addictions and mental health, coordinating with the shelter and other youth housing options.

## 3. Housing Options that Meet the Needs of Youth

The role of **Emergency Shelter** is an important one, providing a central intake point for youth, and connecting them with services. Currently there are between 12 and 18 youth on any given night. A higher number of youth are now sheltered with the new location. It is important to continue to ensure emergency shelter and services for youth are separate and distinct from the adult system.

### Recommendations for 2021

- Better recordkeeping and follow up with youth who leave the shelter to better understand outcomes, along with which supports can help youth be housed and stay housed.
- Tracking of referrals to help evaluate programs and supports in the community.
- Increasing awareness of the Family Mediation program to prevent youth from entering the homelessness system – currently this program has a high rate of success.

**Transitional Housing** is an important aspect of housing options. Transitional housing works well with youth who may need time and support before being permanently housed. There has been an increase in the number of transitional housing units, with positive outcomes. However, there is currently a waitlist for transitional housing.

- Maintain all existing transitional units with Home Base Housing and Kingston Youth Shelter.
- Additionally, there are transitional housing units being planned at the new Youth Campus on Albert Street.
- No further recommendations or actions are required at this time, other than to ensure sustainable funding beyond the current funding period.

**Permanent Housing** is a challenge when there is a lack of affordable housing options. The Youth Campus on Albert Street will add some permanent housing units which will help with this issue. However, it is currently a challenge to find housing, especially for youth.

### Recommendations for 2021

- Evaluate whether there are enough Housing First supports and case workers to support youth to help maintain their housing.



My mom disappeared when I was a toddler. I was put in the care of my grandmother. She moved often and had addiction issues. I spent two years living in a car.

I continued to attend school wherever I was. I moved with my grandmother to Kingston a few years ago, and at the age of 15, I was placed in foster care. It was the first time I slept in a bed by myself and had my own space.

I finished high school and I'm currently living in one of the transitional homes. I am enrolled in a program at St. Lawrence College.

- Gemma, Homeless at age 5

## 4. Supporting Youth with Mental Health & Addictions

Through this initiative, a working committee was created which included the healthcare sector, emergency doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, agencies and youth, co-chaired by Mike MacDonald from Kingston Health Sciences Centre and Bhavana Varma from United Way. An annual Youth Mental Health event was held, bringing together agencies, healthcare providers, youth, family members, government. There were two focus areas:

- Transition Aged Youth: youth who were aging out of the youth system and into adult systems
- Peer support for youth with mental health, assisting with support after discharge or intake at hospitals.

Youth Diversion offers addiction counselling services in elementary and high schools in the region. This continues to be an area of focus, with a high rate of addictions in this region. Addiction & Mental Health Services KFL&A and Maltby Centre continue to offer programs for mental health.

### Recommendations for 2021:

- In March 2021, the Government of Ontario announced some changes for youth which could potentially help with transitional aged youth. We will continue to monitor this and determine whether there is additional work needed at the local level.
- Peer support: a small group has developed a peer support program to support youth with mental health issues. This was put on hold during the pandemic. We will need to find resources to introduce this as it has been identified as a much-needed service.
- During the pandemic, in response to concerns about the impact of the pandemic on youth mental health #quaranteenskfla was started, listing resources and peer sharing ideas.
- Ensure mental health and addictions programs are available to all youth, including rural areas.

## Next Steps

**Mapping, coordinated funding:** In addition to the recommendations listed above, a mapping exercise will be completed in 2021 to map all programs currently offered in the region.

- Kingston and Frontenac: The City of Kingston and United Way of KFL&A will work together to identify funding gaps and opportunities in Kingston and Frontenac.
- United Way will work with the County of Lennox & Addington to confirm programs in L&A.

**Equity Diversity Inclusion and Indigenization (EDII):** The last Point in Time Count indicated that 30% of youth who were homeless identified as indigenous. There is currently limited or no data on youth who are racialized or belong to minority groups.

A focus on EDII will be introduced. Currently there are limited programs for youth who are indigenous or racialized. Qualitative and quantitative data will need to be collected, including conversations with youth and members of diverse groups.

I'VE LIVED IN POVERTY MY ENTIRE LIFE, ALWAYS HAVING TO CHOOSE BETWEEN FOOD OR SHELTER. BY 16, I WAS HOMELESS, ADDICTED TO DRUGS, AND HAD QUIT SCHOOL. MY FRIEND SUGGESTED A PROGRAM THAT HELPS HOMELESS AND TROUBLED YOUTH BETTER THEIR LIVES. I'VE BEEN CLEAN OFF DRUGS AND ALCOHOL FOR 4 YEARS, I WENT TO COLLEGE, AND STARTED MY OWN BUSINESSES. I'M WORKING FULL-TIME NOW, AND I LIVE IN MY OWN PLACE.

- BRIAN, HOMELESS AT AGE 16



# Appendix 1: Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness: 2014-2021 Strategies and Activities:

## 1) Homelessness Prevention:

- I. Support youth engagement in school & community.
- II. Establish pilots (e.g. family support, mental health support, supporting LGBTQ mental health, prevention/diversion).
- III. Promote universal prevention - Create and deliver awareness campaigns at schools and community awareness campaign.

## 2) Integrated System of Care:

- I. Establish systems and protocols to help youth access services easily, including enhancing coordinated access.
- II. Hub for most marginalized youth (collaborative initiative).
- III. Create system to collect and share localized research.
- IV. Continuous case management and follow-up is provided.
- V. Identify issues around institutional discharge into homelessness (i.e. criminal justice, hospital, child welfare).
- VI. Develop strategies for youth employment, skills development and career readiness.
- VII. Explore feasibility of youth-centred mental health services and residential facility

## 3) Increased Range of Housing Options:

- I. Enhance role of emergency shelter in providing housing services and support.
- II. Increase amount of transitional housing available.
- III. Get the most appropriate housing option for youth's needs.
- IV. Work with housing liaison, diversion workers, eviction prevention workers, case managers and landlords in providing affordable housing options for youth.
- V. Municipalities review OW/ODSP policies to cover existing gaps in eligibility for youth who leave home.

## 4) Regional Engagement & Coordination:

- I. Ensure alignment of City of Kingston's housing and homelessness strategies.
- II. Develop plans for rural youth in neighbouring and rural communities in FL&A.

## Appendix 2: Youth Homelessness Initiatives

Between 2013 and 2018 United Way KFL&A received funds from the Kingston Pen Tours towards the community's collective work to prevent and end youth homelessness. Additionally, a transformational gift was received from Mr. A. Britton Smith to support a Transitional Home for youth aged 16-19 years. Some federal and provincial funds provided grants to youth programs. A large event contributed towards a large capital investment in One Roof relocation. Additionally, the City of Kingston and United Way have consistently invested significantly towards youth housing and support programs.

- Kingston Youth Shelter
- Home Base Housing
- Youth Transition Housing – Kingston Youth Shelter and Rise@149
- One Roof Youth Hub
- Resolve Counselling Services – Youth Counseling
- Family Mediation Worker
- Addiction and Mental Health Services – Youth Mental Health Outreach Worker
- Youth Diversion – Intersections Program, Elementary School Addictions Counsellor
- Kairos Addiction Services
- Lennox & Addington – Youth Worker and Youth Hub
- Frontenac – Youth Worker and Youth Hub
- Southern Frontenac – Youth Worker
- More than **156+** youth have been housed with the support of a case manager
- A Family Mediation Worker has counselled **177** youth and their families to look for possible resolution of conflict, which is the number one reason for youth becoming homeless. Only 18 of these cases resulted in a youth entering shelter.
- A Youth Outreach Worker has helped **244** homeless and at-risk youth with mental health issues through cognitive therapy and referrals to psychiatrists and counsellors
- More than **138+** youth under the age of 18 have been connected to support through the Intersections program that refers children and youth through Kingston Police and the OPP when there is non-chargeable behavior. The youngest referral for this preventative program was a 6 year old child.
- A new Early Elementary Substance Use/Addiction Service program has supported more than **50+** children in our elementary school system across KFL&A who either struggle with a substance use issue or witnessing a family member who is struggle.



Youth spoke about the challenges of accessing and finding services in one space.

- To eliminate some of the barriers that youth at-risk face, One Roof youth hub was created in the fall of 2017, bringing together **27** youth-serving agencies in one spot so youth can easily access the supports they need.
- Through a common intake process, group sessions and individual counselling, more than **270+** unique youth have been assisted with mental health, addictions, housing, education, family, life skills, employment services and more, at One Roof.

Youth who live in our neighbouring rural counties face a number of barriers.

- Frontline workers and **265** youth were consulted to develop plans for youth who are homeless or precariously housed in the rural regions of KFL&A.
- A Rural Youth Liaison position has focused on connecting with youth, school counsellors and youth serving agencies in Frontenac County to better understand the unique issues that rural youth face. Emerging themes for development of solutions include strategies to increase access to services and transportation supports.
- In the later part of 2019, a new youth hub space opened in Sharbot Lake and **56** unique youth have been assisted.
- In Lennox & Addington County, the Memorial Building in Napanee was renovated and a new L&A County Youth Hub opened mid 2019. Modeled after One Roof in Kingston, **16** partner organizations committed to providing a range of services and programming to reduce barriers for youth in the region, with more than **70+** unique youth being assisted.

A significant number of youth have mental health issues and concurrent addictions.

- For the past 3 years, **240+** participants, including youth, have provided input at an annual Youth Mental Health planning day focused on - identified priorities to help youth in mental health crisis, and to support transitional aged youth to navigate between youth and adult services.

#### **Kingston Youth Shelter:**

Emergency Shelter: (2014-2020)

- 844 unique youth were served (average 120 per year)
- 766 completed their stay (91%)
- 491 housed (58%)

KYS: Transitional Housing: (2016-2020)

- 55 youth have been supported over the past 5 years, with stays from 1-2+ years

#### **Home Base Housing:**

- Youth Services RISE transitional & supportive (2016-2020) – 5 years
  - 211 youth
- Housing First (2018-2020) – 3 yrs
  - 37 high acuity youth supported to find and maintain housing

**Youth Diversion:** (2016 -2020) – 5 yrs

- KAIROS
  - 1,469 youth served
- CHANCE Mentoring
  - 271 youth participated
- Rebound
  - 685 youth participated
- Intersections (2018-2020)
  - 162 children and youth referrals from OPP, Kingston Police and FACSFLA

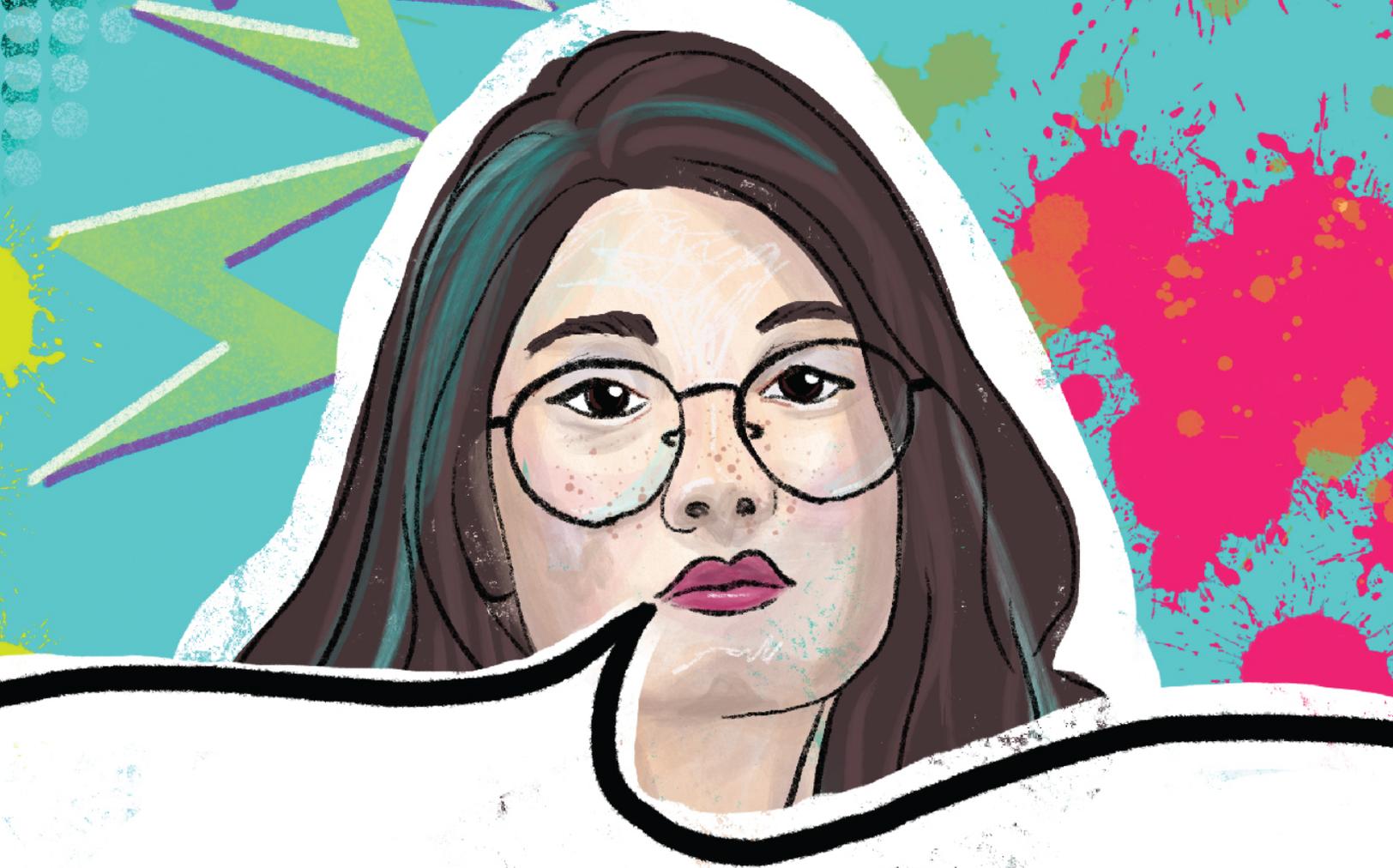
#### **Canadian Mental Health Association:**

(2016-2017) – 2 years

- Promoting Positive Mental Health and Sexual Diverse Youth
  - 148 youth

**Maltby Centre:** (2020) – 1 year

- Transitional Aged Youth Mental Health Clinic - Single-session therapy
  - 37 youth



I was put into foster care at 4.  
When I turned 16 things started to go really bad. I became a teen that nobody wanted so I left. I kind of wanted my foster parents to come after me, and want me back, but they packed my stuff up and sent it. I'm now in transitional housing, and I'm planning on going to culinary school. **If you are a kid who needs support, call 211. It's free. 24 hrs/day.**

- Jeannie, homeless at age 16

## Appendix 3: Youth Questionnaire on Homelessness 2021 Summary Report

In 2021, the youth questionnaire was completed with or by 172 youth from the KFL&A community. These were youth with lived experience through 10 agencies, and a mix of youth with and without lived experience of homelessness, addictions, mental health through the Algonquin & Lakeshore District School Board. Responses came from 14 different programs and groups that serve youth, primarily ages 16-24.

40% of responses would have presumably come from youth ages 16-18, as they came from students in high school classrooms. The responses capture youth who have personal experience with homelessness as well as some who have little to no direct experience of homelessness.

Though there were several responses that seem to equate homelessness with living on the streets or outside, a large number talk more broadly about the lack of having a home or a place that is stable and safe. This answer was provided by around 46% of respondents.

A few responses built on the idea of not have a stable or permanent place to stay – they mention having a place with your name on it, a “place to call your own” (R115).

“Being homeless to me is if you don’t (have) a place to call your home, and when I say home I mean not a shelter or a box but an actual house or apartment that is under your name or your spouses name, in general a place that you can call your own” (R96).

Several responses mention money or lack thereof in correlation to being homeless, and being unable to afford the basic necessities like shelter or food.

Though there were the answers one might expect for what homelessness means – no place to stay or to live, no roof over your head, living on the streets – some answers went beyond just the physical space of “home”. There a several answers that suggest that those that are homeless have no place to *belong*, citing “...a loss of identity” (R23), “...a secure place to feel like oneself” (R26), “...often rejected by society” (R91, R27). And this loss of belonging goes much deeper than just the loss of a physical space to be. Some answers further establish the discussion around not having family or support to turn to.

Here are some examples of answers:

“Not having a home or a place where you belong and are accepted. It most often means not having a physical house but... in the sense that you don’t have people to call your home” (R92).

“..not having family/support around you to succeed” (R33).

Out of 172 respondents, 46% referred to not having permanent shelter, 7.5% mentioned not having family or someone they can rely on, and 7% mentioned not having money.

Respondents were asked to identify what they thought might be reasons for youth to leave home.

- **Family conflict** in some form was the largest category of responses at 53% of the respondents mentioning it. Answers with the term abuse is quite prevalent within this category. Neglect and family issues are also common reasons.
- **Safety** showed up quite often in the answers about what homelessness means, and are principally highlighted in terms of why youth left home – answers citing an unsafe environment or home life. When you include specific stories of abuse or neglect in this category, the prevalence of this theme increases.
- **Mental health**, when including keywords like anxiety, depression, trauma, stress and emotional abuse/neglect, is mentioned by 11% of respondents. This made it the second highest category of responses and helps to highlight its importance for youth.
- Another category identified was **drug use** (could include substance use, addiction) at around 8-9% of respondents referring to it – either on the part of the youth or their family. Only a handful of responses identified specifically whose drug use was the reason for the youth leaving (their family or their own), but lacking the qualifier that it was due to someone else's addiction, we could assume that the response most likely refers to the youth themselves.

These top 4 categories largely overlap within the answers, which suggests a strong correlation between them when thinking about root cause. It highlights the complexity of youth homelessness and the key factors that often lead to it.



By far, the most predominant answer by respondents when asked about **where a youth may go if they left home**, was that they stayed with friends, often with various different friends.

Commonly overlapping with this response, there were a number of answers that discussed youth utilizing multiple options: friends or relatives, shelters and various outdoor locations. The data strongly suggests a high level of inconsistency and moving through, and often exhausting, the different options. This ties in to the answers around what being homeless means – **a lack of a safe, stable place to live.**

There were at least 10 respondents who didn't know anyone who was or had been homeless. But for those that offered a guess about where a youth might stay in that situation, most thought they would stay with friends or at a shelter, consistent with those who actually knew someone who had experienced it or experienced it themselves.

Similar to where youth would stay if they had to leave home, going to their friends or peers was identified as where youth would go to find help or information. This answer came from 25% of respondents. Other possible sources identified were local agencies and/or City or government services (20%), schools (11%), and online (9%).

One common thread among answers throughout the questionnaire is awareness. This response shows up as a barrier to getting help, as a preventative tool, and as a way to improve intervention and support. 21% of respondents mentioned awareness when asked what help might be missing for a youth who needs to leave home or is homeless.

The majority of responses focus more on the circumstances or the experience of homelessness or being homeless, rather than assigning reasons or blame. Only a few responses indicate that homelessness is the fault of the person who is homeless. This is also the case when providing input on earlier intervention or preventing homelessness; though several suggested simply changing behaviours. The majority of responses talk more about support, whether it be from family or from various community services, and even schools. 18% of respondents felt that family support and/or counselling would have helped earlier and around 10% thought that support from family services and/or counselling could prevent youth from becoming homeless.

Included in the responses about prevention were those that could also be identified as suggestions for intervention – there was not always a clear distinction between the two. However, the answers provide a perspective on what may help to reduce the amount of time that a youth is homeless, if it cannot be prevented.

Providing more affordable housing or shelters was an answer provided by only 6% of respondents, while 18% mentioned youth services when asked about prevention. A very common answer was that they just weren't sure what could help prevent homelessness – there seemed to be an understanding that there could be many factors that lead to a youth becoming homeless and there isn't one solution.

So what are youth asking for? **Awareness** still seems to be a large piece of the puzzle.

There were three main components identified in the responses:

- service information for youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness,
- education about homelessness and its causes in schools, and
- community awareness about the prevalence and impacts of the issue, and how to help.

By increasing awareness in these three areas, it could address a number of the barriers identified in the responses. The number one response category when asked what prevents youth from accessing services was **stigma or fear of judgement** at 29%. When including **fear or not knowing what to expect** this goes up to 45%.

Access to services is mentioned as a barrier for youth by 6%. In delving into issues around accessing services, almost 34% of respondents stated that access was good or that they were unaware of issues. It does suggest that access may not be the main concern but rather the lack of knowledge of what services are actually available.

Potential avenues for improving awareness and access to information for youth that were mentioned are: google searches and/or social media, libraries, through school counsellors or teachers or more generally in schools, as well as increased promotion of agencies like Home Base Housing and One Roof Youth Hub, the Kingston Youth Shelter and its various services, Integrated Care Hub, Addiction & Mental Health Services, and Street Health in response to feedback around addictions and safe injection/consumption sites, and Ontario Works or other government assistance.

In terms of intervention, much of the feedback indicates a need for family and community support, particularly around mental health, building healthy relationships and lifestyles. Youth reference supporting youth, but also family, other important people in their lives, as well as service providers. Funding for individuals & families were mentioned, as well as for programs and services. Together, the answers suggest a desire for an overarching community approach that encourages more meaningful engagement with the issue from the general public and a stronger support network made up of a variety of resources. This includes housing, financial assistance, mental health, employment and building life skills.

## Summary By Response Theme

What does homelessness or being homeless mean to you?

- 46% – not having permanent shelter (80 responses mentioned this)
- 3% – living rough, on the streets (6 responses)
- 7.5% – not having family or safe family; nobody to rely on (13 responses)
- 7% – not having (enough) money (12 responses)

What causes youth to leave home?

- 53% - family conflict, abuse, neglect (92 responses)
- 8.7% - drug use (15 responses)
- 6% - outgrew foster care or were kicked out (10 responses)
- 11 % - mental health (12 specified mental health or anxiety, depression, 8 other)
- 2% - gender identity, including parents not accepting them (3-4 responses)

Where did they go?

- 43% - went to friend's homes (74 responses)
- 9% - shelter (16 responses)
- 6% - outdoors, streets, parks, etc. (11 responses)
- 3% - extended family (6 responses)
- 4% - didn't know anyone how is or was homeless or answered n/a (7 responses)

What could have helped them earlier?

- 18% - family support and personal counselling (31 responses)
- 8% - change of behaviour or actions (14 responses)
- 5-6% - resource information (10 responses)
- 6% - seeking help earlier (11 responses)
- 6% - mentor/direct support (11 responses)
- 4-5% - nothing could have helped
- 2% - CAS involvement (4 responses)  
2 responses mentioned housing

Where would they turn for information/help?

- 25% - from friends/peers (43 responses)
- 20% - local agencies, emergency, Child or City Services (34 responses)
- 11% - school (19 responses)
- 9% - online (16 responses)

What's missing?

- 21.5% - awareness (37 responses)
- 11% - nothing is missing (20 responses)
- 7% - shelters & housing (12 responses)
- 4-5% for mental health supports and for reduced wait times (8 responses each)
- 2% for groups/centres and for limited help available (3 responses each)

What prevents youth from accessing services?

- 29% - stigma (50 responses)
- 16% - fear/not sure what to expect (27 responses)
- 8% - awareness or lack of (14 responses)
- 6% - access or lack of (11 responses)
- 4% - nothing prevents them (7 responses)
- 3.5% - mental health (6 responses)

Have you heard of issues for youth accessing services?

- 33-34% - good access or no issues (58 responses)
- 9% - transportation (16 responses)
- 8% - internet, technology (14 responses)
- 6 % - knowledge, fear of the unknown (11 responses)
- 4.6% - mentioned COVID-19 (8 responses)

What could prevent youth from becoming homeless?

- 18% - youth services (31 responses)
- 17% - unsure (29 responses)
- 12% - awareness, reduce stigma, advertising (21 responses)
- 10% - family services, counselling, support (18 responses)
- 7% - mental health, safe injection (12 responses)
- 6% - more affordable housing, shelters (11 responses)
- 4% - more jobs or help getting jobs (7 responses)



When I was 10 my mom moved out with my 2 older siblings so I stayed behind with my dad. Most of the time we had no heat, and were short of food. I missed a lot of school to keep the wood stove burning and the water running. My dad has mental health problems and kicked me out of the house. When I was 16, I began working with a Youth Worker. Since then, And now am living with a room mate in the village where I grew up. I no longer feel so alone and I know where to turn for help when I need it.

If you are a kid who needs support, call 211.  
It's free. 24 hrs/day.

— Braden, homeless at age 16

For more information  
[www.unitedwayfla.ca/youth](http://www.unitedwayfla.ca/youth)

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