

Understanding Youth



Homelessness in Canada

The first national survey

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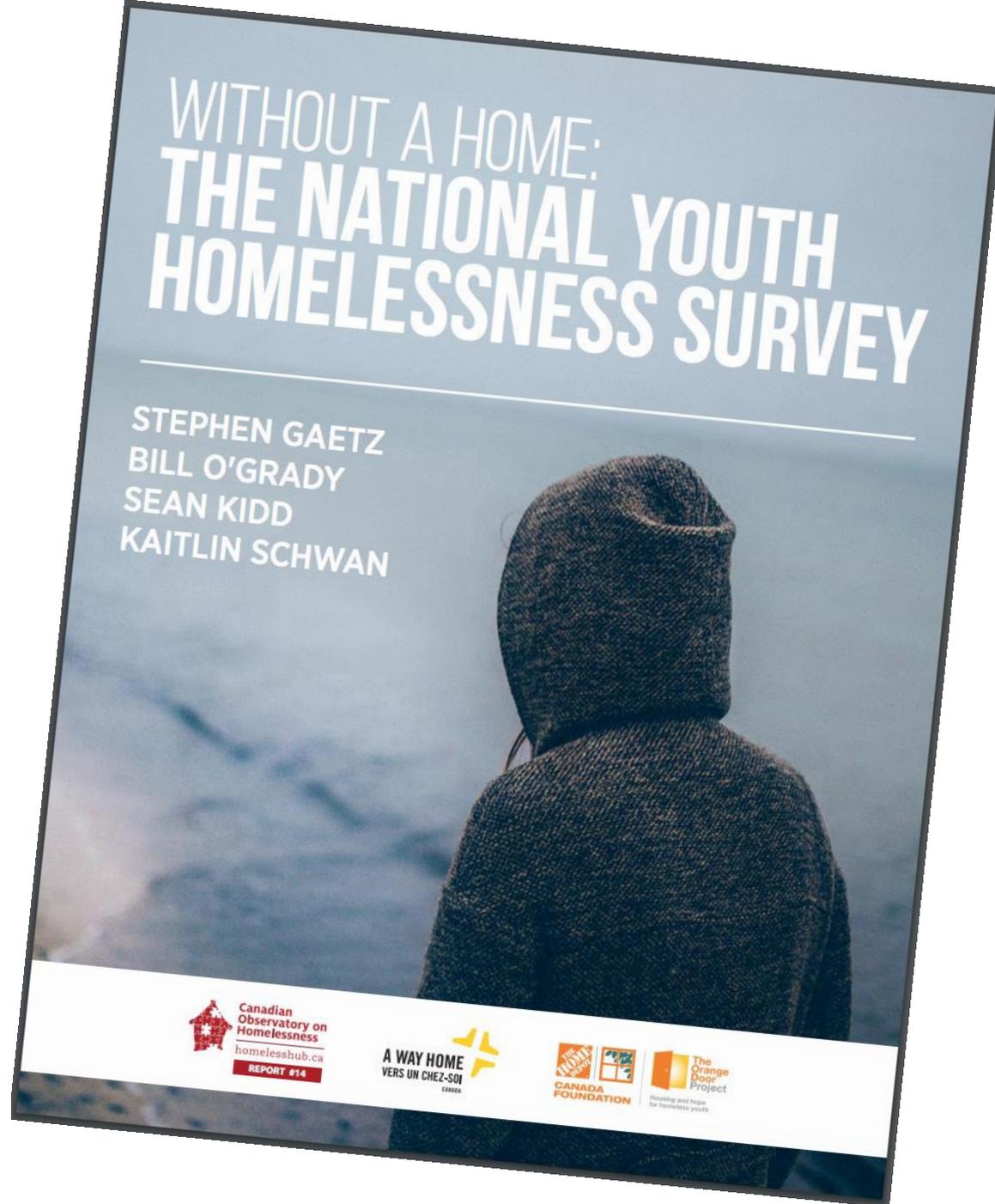


European
Observatory on
Homelessness



FEANTSA

National Survey Results 2016



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REPORT #14

A WAY HOME
VERS UN CHEZ-SOI
CANADA

THE
ORANGE
DOOR
PROJECT
CANADA
FOUNDATION

The
Orange
Door
Project
Housing and hope
for homeless youth



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Part 1

RESULTS OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH HOMELESSNESS SURVEY

1138

YOUTH
PARTICIPANTS

57

PARTICIPATING
AGENCIES FROM

42

COMMUNITIES
ACROSS CANADA

Defining youth homelessness

DEFINITION

“Youth homelessness” refers to the situation and experience of young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire a stable, safe or consistent residence.



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Diversity!



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Key Finding

29.5%

*identified as
LGBTQ2S*

30.6%

*identified as
Indigenous*

28.2%

*identified as members of
racialized communities*

1.8%

*identified as
transgender*

1.8%

*identified as
two-spirit*

2.5%

*identified as
gender non-binary*

10.1%

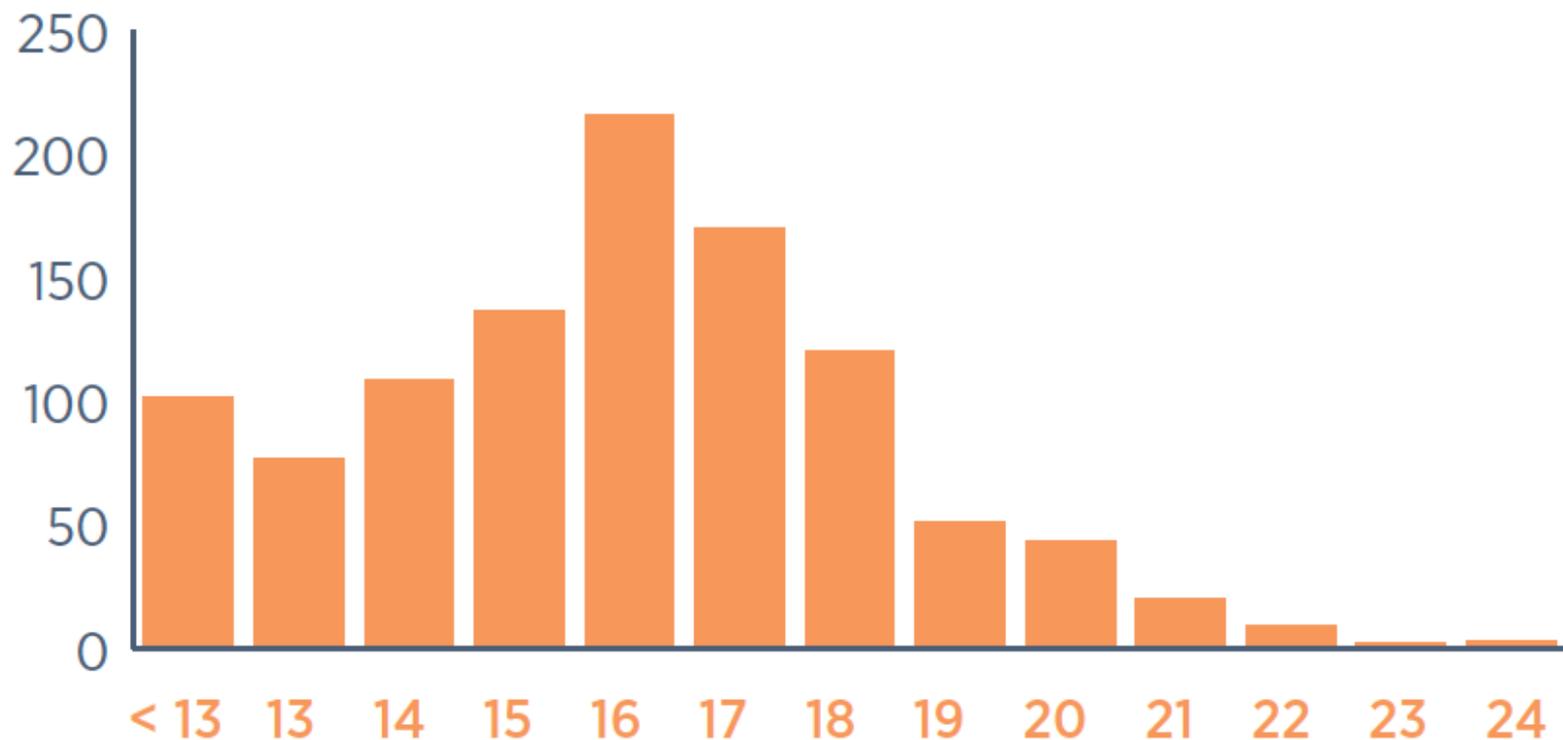
*were born
outside Canada*



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Age of first experience of homelessness



Age of first experience of homelessness

Many homeless youth became homeless before they were 16, and youth who leave home at a younger age experience greater adversity on the streets.

40.1%

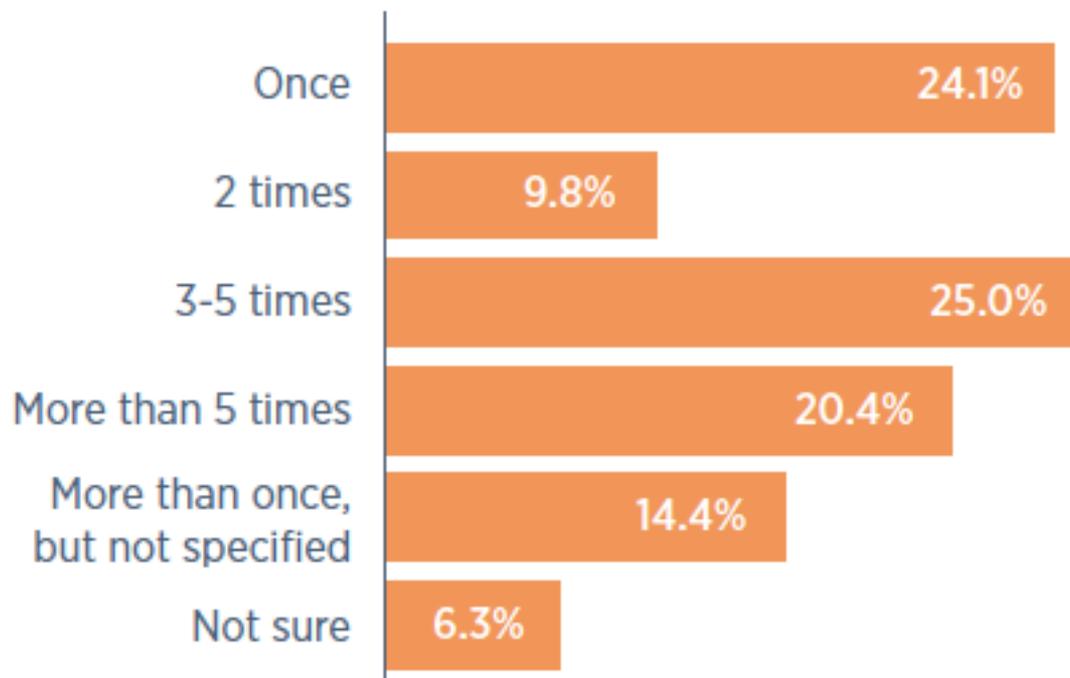
were younger than 16 when they first experienced homelessness

THOSE WHO LEAVE HOME AT AN EARLY AGE ARE MORE LIKELY TO:

- Experience multiple episodes of homelessness
- Be involved with child protection services
- Be tested for ADHD
- Experience bullying
- Be victims of crime once homeless, including sexual assault
- Have greater mental health and addictions symptoms
- Experience poorer quality of life
- Attempt suicide
- Become chronically homeless



Number of experiences of homelessness



24.1%

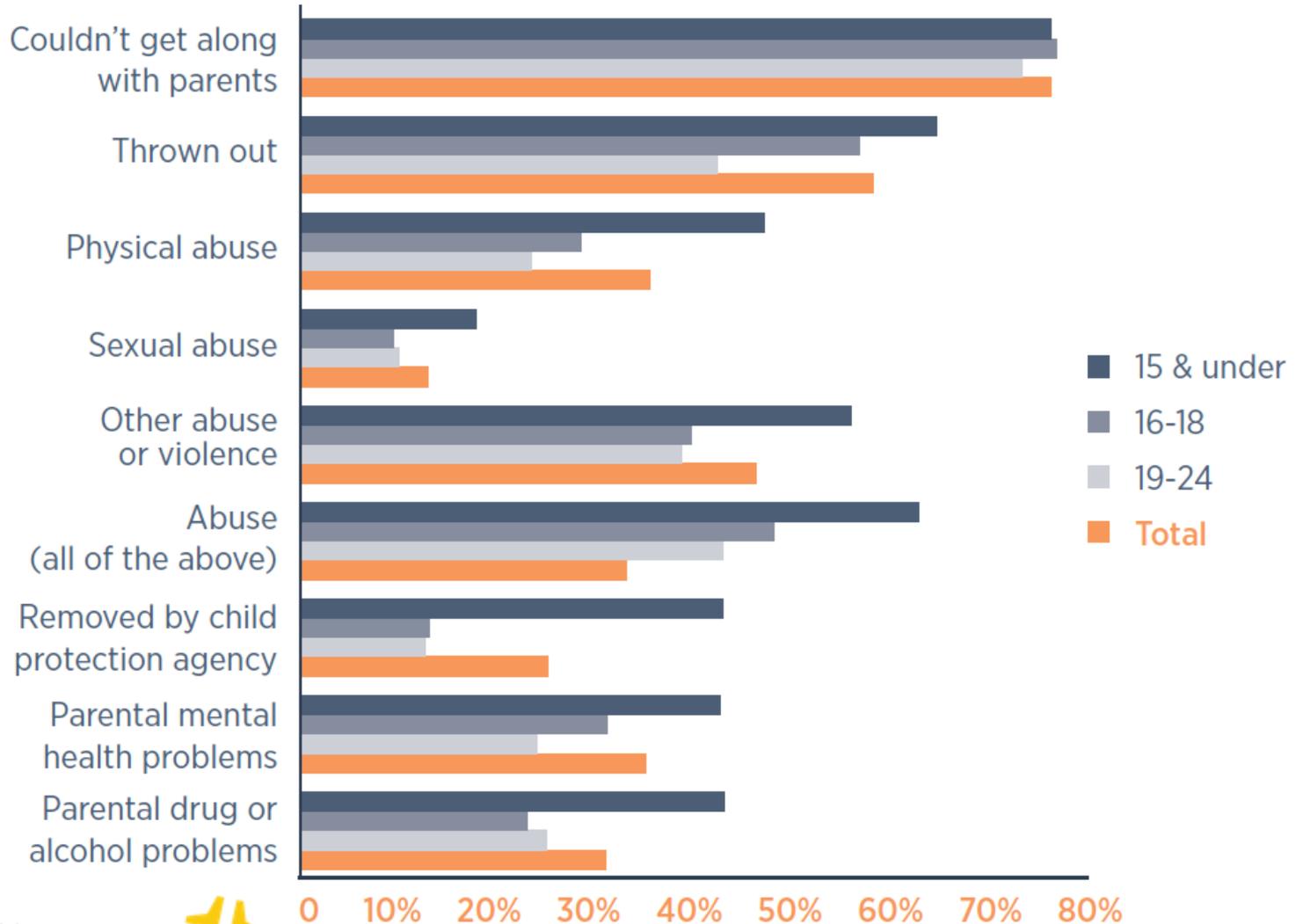
*reported being homeless
only once*

75.9%

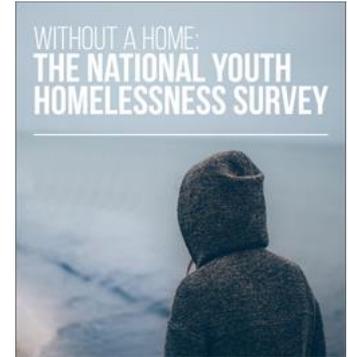
*had experienced multiple
episodes of homelessness*



Conflict with Parents



Youth who are homeless with previous involvement with Child Protection Services



57.8%

indicated some kind of involvement with child protection services in the past

47.2%

had a history of placements in foster care and/or group homes

30.9% were in group homes

MENTAL HEALTH

Findings indicated that a total of 85.4% (942) of the youth fell in the 'high' symptom/distress category. This is indicative, in the general Canadian population, of youth midway between inpatient and outpatient psychiatric care levels.

85.4%

*of youth fell in the
'high' symptom/
distress category*

42%

*reported at least
one suicide attempt*

35.2%

*reported at least
one drug overdose
requiring hospitalization*



Learning Disabilities

Tested for a learning disability

Ever tested at school

for a learning disability? % (NUMBER)

Yes 50% (502)

No 43% (430)

Not sure 8% (80)

Tested for ADHD

Ever tested at school

for ADHD? % (NUMBER)

Yes 41% (397)

No 49% (481)

Don't know 10% (101)

Being bullied

When growing up were

you ever bullied at school? % (NUMBER)

No 17% (172)

Sometimes 37% (363)

Often 46% (453)

Part 2

Life on the Streets

The experience of being homeless



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When we let young people become homeless ...



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When we let young people become homeless ...

- **Health worsens**
 - **Mental health declines**
 - **Dropping out of school**
 - **Exploitation**
 - **Involvement with the law**
 - **Trauma and criminal victimization**
 - **Greater risk of addictions**
 - **Entrenchment in live on the streets**



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Dropping Out?

53.2%

of youth experiencing
homelessness drop
out of school

< 9%

of Canadian youth
drop out of school

NOT in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

	% (NUMBER)
Employed	8.0% (82)
Employed AND Training/Education	12.0% (123)
Training or Education	29.4% (300)
Not in Employment, Training or Education	50.5% (516)

50.5%

of homeless
youth are Not
in Employment,
Education or
Training

12-14%

of Canadian
youth are NEET

PROLONGED EXPERIENCES OF HOMELESSNESS

Exposure to street violence makes the impact of pre-street adversity much less relevant. This suggests that whether prior to becoming homeless young people were exposed to adversity or not, experiencing violence while homeless has a ‘leveling’ effect on youth mental health risk.

Exposure to sexual and physical violence on the street made youth over three times as likely to be in the high mental health risk group.

Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth

A Ten-City Study
Executive Summary

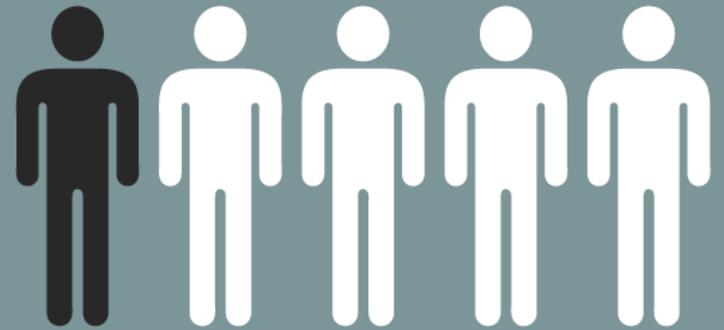


This study provides a detailed account of **labor** and **sexual exploitation** experienced by homeless youth in Covenant House's care in ten cities.



Exploitation and Sex Trafficking

Nearly
1 in 5



(19%) of interviewed youth were identified as victims of some form of human trafficking.

How long have people been homeless?

A typology of chronic homelessness

Categories of chronicity	% (NUMBER)
TRANSITIONAL: Individuals and families who generally enter the shelter system for a short stay (less than a month) and usually for one stay only.	46.8% (508)
EPISODIC: This includes individuals who move into and out of homelessness several times over a three-year period (and some of these moves may include residence in corrections or hospital).	21.8% (237)
CHRONIC: Individuals and families who are homeless more than a year and typically include long-term shelter users and unsheltered 'absolutely homeless' populations.	31.4% (341)



Assets: Relationships with Friends and Family, and Self Esteem



People you can count on

Do you have someone you can count on to:	DISAGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)	NEITHER DISAGREE NOR AGREE	AGREE (STRONGLY OR SOMEWHAT)
Provide help in an emergency?	21.3% (227)	12.3% (131)	66.4% (708)
Provide you with emotional support?	22.2% (237)	15.9% (170)	61.8% (659)
Check in to see how you are doing?	22.1% (234)	13.8% (146)	64.2% (680)

Friendship: Level of engagement and quality

Quality of friendship	RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ON FRIENDSHIP	% (NUMBER)
POSITIVE Relations with friends	1. Very engaged (respondents agreed 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat' with all 9 statements)	23.9% (264)
	2. Engaged (respondents agreed with 5 to 8 statements)	27.3% (301)
MODERATE	3. Moderate	24.3% (268)
NEGATIVE Relations with friends	4. Disengaged (respondents disagreed with 5 to 8 statements)	13.2% (146)
	5. Very disengaged (respondents disagreed 'Strongly' or 'Somewhat' with all 9 statements)	8.2% (90)

Family Relationships

77.3%

*of youth surveyed
would like to improve
relationships with
family*

71.6%

*of youth surveyed were
in contact with a family
member at least once
per month*



Part 3

DISCUSSION

Implications for policy
and practice



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Sooooooooo...

If we know the following:

- Many young people experience homelessness at a very young age
- Many demonstrate high rates of housing instability
- Many have a history of involvement child protection
- High rates of adverse childhood experiences

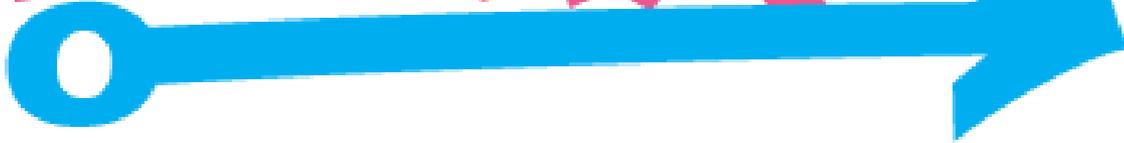


We need to consider *prevention*:

Develop a system that more aggressively addresses the needs of young people 16 and under

1. Family First approaches
2. Early intervention strategies
3. School-Community partnerships
4. Transitional supports for young people leaving care

MOVING FORWARD



How do we help young people make rapid exits from homelessness?

The data from our Finding Home study confirm:

- Ongoing housing instability
- Nutritional Vulnerability
- Declining mental health
- Lower rates of school participation
- Higher unemployment
- Greater risk of criminal victimization
- Higher levels of chronicity

Part 4

Implications for *Housing First for Youth*

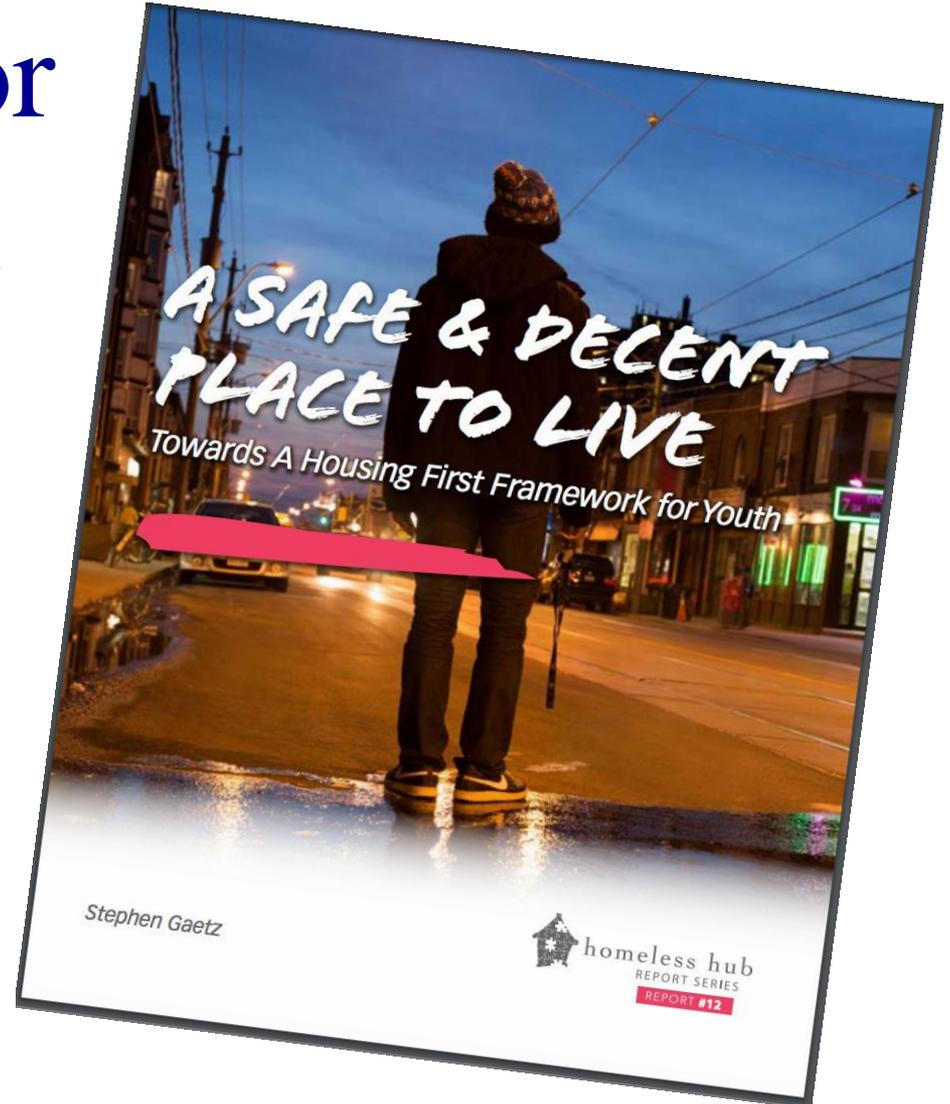


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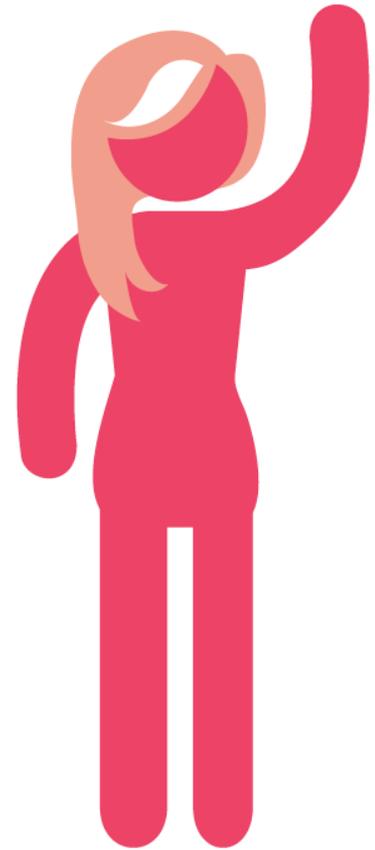
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A framework for Housing First for Youth (2014)



FIRST AND FOREMOST, A YOUTH-FOCUSED APPROACH TO HOUSING FIRST MUST GO BEYOND ASSISTING YOUNG PEOPLE MERELY TO BECOME INDEPENDENT, BUT RATHER, TO ENABLE THEM TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO ADULTHOOD.



CORE PRINCIPLES

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 and client-driven supports with no time limits.**
5. **Social inclusion and community integration.**



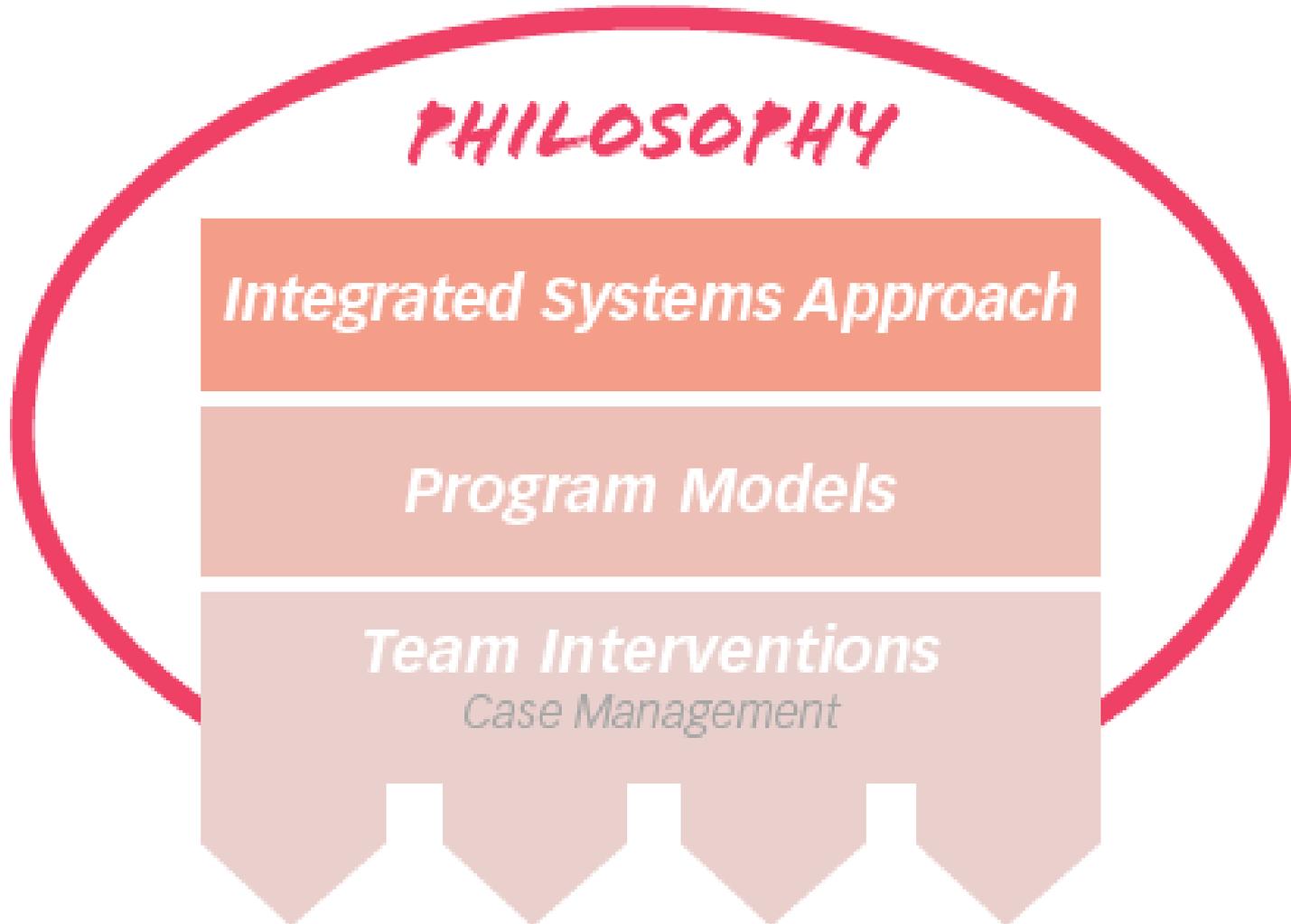
Housing First Framework

It is both a

PROGRAM and a

PHILOSOPHY?

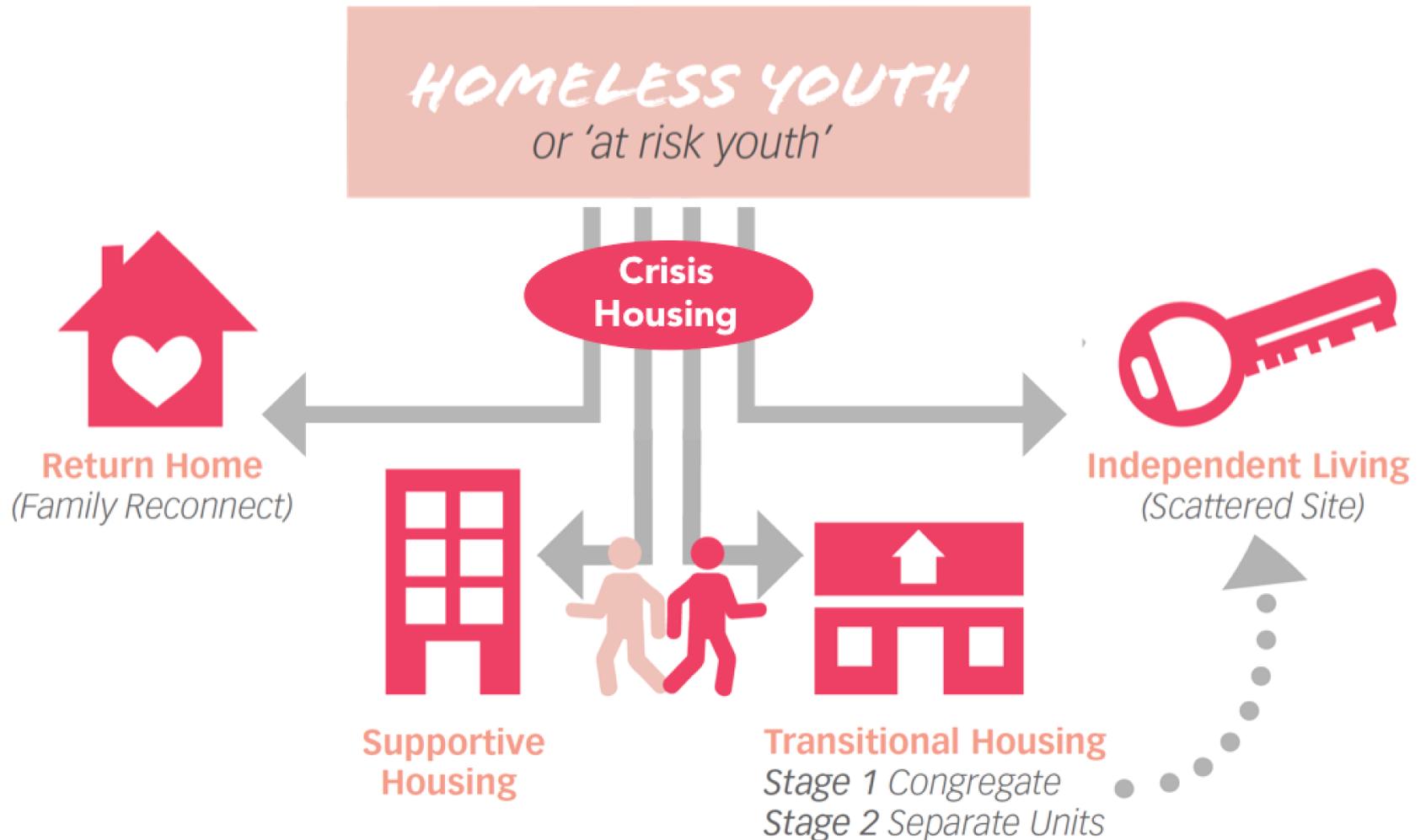
The Application of Housing First



What kind of *HOUSING* is needed?



Youth need different Housing Options



SUPPORTS



1. HOUSING



2. HEALTH &
WELL-BEING



3. ACCESS TO
INCOME &
EDUCATION



5. SOCIAL
INCUSION



4. COMPLEMENTARY
SUPPORTS