Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness Steering Committee
Terms of Reference (ToR) DRAFT 4

1. Overview:

1.1 Background:

A plan to end youth homelessness, developed with sound research and community engagement and agreed upon by key community agencies will achieve a number of important outcomes in Winnipeg:

i. Build on existing community capacity and increases capacity for collective action: speaking with one voice on issues related to youth homelessness

ii. Develop a 'table of experts' who can speak to youth homelessness

iii. Mobilize resources toward a common goal

iv. Increase awareness and understanding of youth homelessness and how to effectively end it for a range of stakeholders (the public, funders, policy makers, community leaders, community agencies)

v. Put youth homelessness is on the public agenda, therefore increasing political support for prevention and intervention

vi. Build strategic relationships with decision-makers and funders

For the plan to achieve these objectives, it needs to consider range of perspectives, to address key policy and program gaps, and to adopt a youth development focus. A steering committee of community leaders will play a decision-making role in the development of this plan.

1.2 Meaning of these Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference are meant to reflect the common intention of the subscribing organizations. Terms of Reference are not legally-binding, but they do represent values, approaches and goals that are supported in good faith by these organizations. As far as possible, these Terms of Reference propose processes that are open, consultative and collaborative and that also aim to produce effective and demonstrable outcomes.

1.3 Partnership Mission:

Lead the development of a holistic, community-based Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Winnipeg that is in alignment with relevant, local, regional, national, and international decolonization values and practices as described in Annex A:

1.4 Partnership Principles and Guiding Values

The goal of ending homelessness is to ensure housing stability, which means people have a fixed address and housing that is appropriate (affordable, safe, adequately maintained, accessible and suitable in size), and includes required services as needed (supportive), in addition to income and supports.[1] The partnership supporting these Terms of Reference will uphold the following principles in their work together, in the development of a Winnipeg plan to end youth homelessness:

Transparency	Youth centred/driven approach
Open and ongoing communication	Owned and led by community
Respect	Holistic
Inclusion	Consensus building
Efficiency	Solution-focused/constructive
Strength-based approach	Informed by a lens of decolonization
Harm Reduction	Responsive to vulnerable youth[2]

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Role of the Steering Committee

The Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness Steering Committee will coordinate and oversee the development of a collaborative and comprehensive strategy for youth homelessness. The Steering Committee will:

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[1] Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/

[2] Homeless youth who are from racialized groups, LGBTQI, and/or youth who are experiencing exploitation, mental, and other health issues.

- Seek out and support the provision of resources toward the development and implementation of a Plan to End Youth Homelessness
- Make decisions about hiring and supervision of staff and consultants responsible for the development of the Plan to End Youth Homelessness
- Make decisions about plan process, including consultation, participation and research
- Seek the input and advice of key stakeholders, including youth with lived experience of homelessness, government decision-makers, government program staff, funders, business leaders, frontline staff, and other community agencies in the development of the Plan to End Youth Homelessness
- Work to achieve a plan, with a vision, goals, and implementation strategy that is agreed upon by all members

2.2 Community Forums

The Steering Committee will schedule one or more Community Forums in order to consult directly with the broader community. These Community Forums will be at a time and place and conducted in a manner that will be as inclusive and participative as possible.

3. Process

3.1 Membership Composition

Membership of the Steering Committee will comprise the organizations and representatives listed in Annex B:

3.2 New members

Other organizations having an interest and investment in the goals of this Plan to End Youth Homelessness and subscribing to the principles and values affirmed in these Terms of Reference will be invited to join the Steering Committee by its existing members. The Steering Committee aims to represent key organizations who work with youth experiencing homelessness, therefore members should be in a decision-making role at their organization and able to speak on its behalf. By indicating in writing their desire to join the Steering Committee and affirming their agreement with these Terms of Reference, and upon confirmation by the Steering Committee at its next meeting, an organization becomes a member and these Terms of Reference are automatically amended to include the joining organization as a signatory member.

3.3 Decision-making process for Steering Committee

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to guide a Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness which has the support of community agencies. Consequently, all decisions of the Steering Committee will be by consensus, that is, no opinion strongly opposed.

Should there be opinions opposed to particular actions, but not strongly enough to prevent final consensus, the range of perspectives will be reflected in the minutes of the meeting to form part of the record of the Steering Committee's deliberations.

3.4 Participation in Steering Committee meetings

Each member organization of the Steering Committee will be an equal and active partner. The member agency can designate one staff with one alternate to represent the organization at meetings. In order to ensure an efficient process, partner organizations will make all efforts to ensure continuity of attendance at meetings by the same staff. Partner organizations, when unable to attend a Steering Committee meeting, may make their views known to the Committee via e-mail, which will form part of that Committee meeting's minutes.

3.5 Meeting Chair and record keeping

Steering Committee meetings will be chaired by Kelly Holmes (RaY), unless the Steering Committee decides otherwise. A record of each meeting will be kept by SPCW and minutes will be circulated to all Steering Committee members in a timely fashion.

3.6 Withdrawal from the Steering Committee
Any organization may withdraw from the Steering Committee by giving notice in writing to the Committee, which notice shall be read at the following meeting. Any organization failing to attend three consecutive Steering Committee meetings may be deemed to have withdrawn unless they communicate in writing their desire to continue as members.

3.7 Schedule of Steering Committee meetings
The Steering Committee will meet monthly at a time agreed upon by all partners.

3.8 Review the Purpose of the Steering Committee
The Steering Committee will review its purpose, goals, objectives and achievements six months after the signing of these Terms of Reference. This review shall include consideration of the role and processes associated with the Steering Committee during the planning stage.

3.9 Amendments to these Terms of Reference
Amendments to these Terms of Reference may be made at any time in the same manner as these Terms of Reference were reviewed and affirmed by signature by every member organization.

3.10 Managing Conflict of Interest
Cross-sector collaboration by its very nature puts organizations into relatively unfamiliar situations. As such, members must learn by doing - through mutual exploration. It is essential to establish trust early on so that parties on both sides can feel comfortable exploring and experimenting.[3] The Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness Steering Committee will strive to implement the 4 steps to enhancing trust:

- **Choosing a convener [leader]:** A good convener should be able to challenge ideas and assumptions, and should have well-developed interpersonal and organizational skills. The extent of the convener's authority in facilitating the group's work should be negotiated by the group and should allow the convener to "…delegate responsibility for specific steps; build conditions by which…individual members can influence the whole group; remain rather distant from the content of what we are discussing; and focus on the process (the vision, the actions of group members, and what is needed to move things forward)."…

- **Holding effective meetings:** Effective meetings are of special importance at the beginning of the collaboration, and allow partners to establish trust and familiarity, strategize together and split up responsibilities. It is useful to operationalize terms such as 'effectiveness' and 'success' into more concrete terms specific to the effort at hand in order to ensure consistency in communications among group members and across time.

- **Involving everyone in meetings:** Part of the responsibility of the convener is to provide vital information to the group, to assist in developing relationships and to lead in working toward goals and expectations common to the entire group, and decisions of which all participants and approve.

- **Disclosing self-interests:** Acknowledging how the collaboration benefits participants' organizations is crucial to developing trust and respect within the collaborative group.

3.11 Spokespersonship and Other Communications
The Steering Committee will identify key spokespersons and communiques with regard to the project updates and engagement in collaboration with the project host. Information for public distribution and media requests will be vetted through the Project Manager, in collaboration with the Chair, utilizing media releases, email, a project website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other media-related tools.

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[3] Carolyn Parkinson, (2006). Building Successful Collaborations: A guide to collaboration among non-profit agencies and between non-profit agencies and businesses, Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation

4. Confirmation ~~Declaration~~

I, *the undersigned, agree to commit our organization to support the Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness Steering Committee and to abide by the processes, principles and values as set out in these Terms of Reference dated _____.*

Agency Name: …………………………………………………………………….

Signature: ………………………………………………………………………..

Position: …………………………………………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………………………………………

Contact person and alternate:

1. ………………………………………………………………………

2. ………………………………………………………………………..

Address: …………………………………………………………………

Phone: ……………………   **Email**: ……………………………………   **Fax**: …………………………

Website: …………………………………………………….

Annex A:

Colonization and Decolonization in Manitoba

The Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness will be developed through a decolonization lens. Given that indigenous people in Manitoba have experienced the brunt of European colonization and that York Factory and the Red River Colony were key geographic centres for this process, this plan will address decolonization primarily from an indigenous perspective. Furthermore, the Steering Committee acknowledges the first peoples of these territories as the Ininew (Cree), Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ojibwe-Cree, Dene, Dakota, Inuit, and Metis. The Steering Committee will strive to ally and align itself and internal and external stakeholders and systems with appropriate decolonization research, best-practices, and processes as developed by indigenous communities and nations. Colonization is an ongoing process that extends beyond Canadian borders (for example, indigenous resistance to Canadian mining interests in Bolivia). Examples of early European-based strategies used to colonize the Prairies are:

Colonizing Strategies[4]

- increase the foreign population
- develop European-style social institutions; e.g., schools, churches
- create or control a local economy
- learn about the territory
- assimilate the Aboriginal peoples
- eliminate the Aboriginal peoples

An Overview of Colonization[5]

Poka Laenui (2000), an Indigenous Hawaiian, describes colonization and decolonization as being social processes, each characterized by five distinct but interconnected phases. Interestingly, the phases of decolonization…share similarities with what are now well-recognized steps in the process of healing from post-traumatic stress. Laenui's phases of colonization are summarized below:

- **Denial and withdrawal:** The colonial culture is viewed as the only real culture. Colonial people deny the value and even the existence of Indigenous culture. Indigenous people gradually withdraw from their own cultural practices.
- **Destruction/eradication** of all physical symbols of Indigenous culture; destruction of sacred sites, art and ceremonial objects.
- **Denigration/belittlement/insult:** Colonial institutions (church, health and legal systems) denigrate and belittle Indigenous systems and any continuing practice of the Indigenous culture. For example, Aboriginal belief systems and ceremonies may be characterized as devil worship and traditional healers as witch doctors. Some traditional practices may be criminalized.
- **Surface accommodation/tokenism:** In this phase, the remnants of Indigenous culture are tolerated as folklore and given token regard.
- **Transformation/exploitation:** Aspects of traditional culture that refuse to disappear are transformed into the culture of the colonial society. Examples include: Christian churches using Aboriginal pastors or priests and permitting the use of Aboriginal languages; economically exploiting Indigenous art; and using traditional symbols and designs to decorate clothing and buildings.

Various characteristics and permutations of these phases of colonization can be recognized in the history of the United States, New Zealand, Australia, and Greenland—although not necessarily chronologically and not all phases are evident in every country.

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[4] LearnAlberta.ca, (2010). Considering the Impact on Issues or Events, Alberta Education

[5] Linda Archibald, (2006). Decolonization and Healing: Indigenous Experiences in the United States, New Zealand, Australia and Greenland, Prepared for The Aboriginal Healing Foundation

Decolonization Strategies[6]

Everyday decolonization and resurgence practices:
If colonization is a disconnecting force, then resurgence is about reconnecting with homelands, cultures, and communities. Both decolonization and resurgence facilitate a renewal of our roles and responsibilities as Indigenous peoples to the sustainable praxis of Indigenous livelihoods, food security, community governance, and relationships to the natural world and ceremonial life that enables the transmission of these cultural practices to future generations (Corntassel, 2008). It is basically the implementation of *digadadtsele'i* as communities mobilize for a spiritual revolution. According to Alfred (2009), a process of Indigenous regeneration includes collective community efforts to achieve the following four objectives:

1.   The restoration of indigenous presence(s) on the land and the revitalization of land-based practices;
2.   An increased reliance on traditional diet(s) among Indigenous people;
3.   The transmission of indigenous culture, spiritual teachings and knowledge of the land between Elders and youth;
4.   The strengthening of familial activities and re-emergence of indigenous cultural and social institutions as governing authorities within First Nations; and,
5.   Short-term and long-term initiatives and improvements in sustainable land-based economies as the primary economies of reserve based First Nations communities and as supplemental economies for urban indigenous communities.

While the above-listed indicators of cultural regeneration offer several promising pathways to community resurgence, the adequacy of these measures will vary from community to community. As Nishnaabekwe scholar Leanne Simpson points out, "Indigenous Knowledge is critical for resurgence".... She outlines a four-part strategy designed to transcend the politics of distraction and keep the focus on the revitalization of Indigenous communities:

1.   Confront "funding" mentality – It is time to admit that colonizing governments and private corporations are not going to fund our decolonization;
2.   Confronting linguistic genocide – There is little recognition or glory attached to it, but without it, we will lose ourselves;
3.   Visioning resurgence – The importance of visioning and dreaming a better future based on our own Indigenous traditions cannot be underestimated;
4.   The need to awaken ancient treaty and diplomatic mechanisms – Renewing our precolonial treaty relationships with contemporary neighbouring Indigenous Nations promotes decolonization and peaceful co-existence, and it builds solidarity among Indigenous Nations.

Recommendations for Constitutional Reconciliation[7]

Drawing on treaties, international law, the work of other Indigenous scholars, and especially personal experiences, Marie Battiste documents the nature of Eurocentric models of education, and their devastating impacts on Indigenous knowledge. Chronicling the negative consequences of forced assimilation and the failure of current educational policies to bolster the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal populations, Battiste proposes a new model of education. She argues that the preservation of Aboriginal knowledge is an Aboriginal right and a right preserved by the many treaties with First Nations. Current educational policies must undergo substantive reform. Central to this process is the rejection of the racism inherent to colonial systems of education, and the repositioning of Indigenous humanities, sciences, and languages as vital fields of knowledge.

 Battiste suggests the urgency for this reform lies in the social, technological, and economic challenges facing society today, and the need for a revitalized knowledge system which incorporates both Indigenous and Eurocentric thinking. The new model she advocates is based on her experiences growing up in a Mi'kmaw community, and the decades she has spent as a teacher,

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[6] Jeff Corntassel, (2012). Re-envisioning resurgence: Indigenous pathways to decolonization and sustainable self-determination, Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society Vol. 1, pp. 86-101.

[7] Battiste, M. (2002). Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy in First Nations Education - A Literature Review with Recommendations. In National Working Group on Education, Our Children: Keepers of the Sacred Knowledge. Ottawa, ON: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, February.

activist, and university scholar.

1. Affirm Canada's Commitment to Indigenous Knowledge

2. Recognize and Affirm Aboriginal and Treaty Rights as Creating Constitutional Educational Jurisdictions

3. Affirm Aboriginal Lifestyles and Intergenerational Use of Indigenous Knowledge

4. Affirm Aboriginal Teachings of Next Generations within Place

5. Develop and Support Indigenous Knowledge Innovations in Educational Institutions

6. Develop Opportunities to Learn in Order to Teach

7. Create new certification and standard setting for First Nations schools

8. Encourage Research and Innovations in Classroom Work

9. Adopt Principles and Guidelines for Respectful Protocols

10. Implement the UN Human Rights Covenants and the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

11. Implement the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

12. Protect Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage

13. Support First Nations' Capacity to Oversee Use of Indigenous Knowledge

14. Develop Research and Capacity Building in Indigenous Knowledge and Pedagogy

Annex: B

Membership of the Steering Committee will be comprised of the following organizations and representatives:

	Organization
1.	Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc.
2.	EAGLE Urban Transition Centre
3.	Macdonald Youth Services
4.	The 595 Prevention Team
5.	New Directions for Children, Youth, Adults and Families
6.	Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY)
7.	Rossbrook House
8.	Social Planning Council of Winnipeg
9.	Spence Neighbourhood Association
10.	Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network Inc.
11.	Youth Agencies Alliance
12.	Rainbow Resource Centre
13.	Youth Peer Leader (Aged 18-22)
14.	Youth Peer Leader (Aged 23-26)