Housing Homeless Youth in Vancouver: Key Barriers and Strategic Responses

Authors: Sandip Basi, Tabrina Clelland, Navi Khind, Amy Morris, and Peter Severinson

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Executive Summary

There were an estimated 65,000 youth in Canada who were either homeless or living in emergency shelters in 2009. Vancouver's 2011 homeless count found 349 homeless youth, an increase of 29 percent from the 2008 count. Research shows that the causes and characteristics of youth homelessness are distinct from those of the adult homeless population. Housing agencies around the world are studying these differences in order to craft specialized strategies to reduce youth homeless. This study attempts to identify the best strategy for Vancouver.

Our approach has four components: a review of the literature on causes and appropriate responses to youth homelessness, a review of successful policies and practices used in other regions facing youth-homelessness challenges comparable to Vancouver's, detailed case studies of select programs and an overview of services for homeless youth in Vancouver. Our selection of successful practices is informed by literature from academia, government agencies and NGOs, as well as from recommendations by policy leaders and practitioners who participated in phone- or email-based interviews.

The following is a summary of all our findings:

Lessons From the Literature and Other Jurisdictions

- Prevention and early intervention are feasible and highly effective methods for reducing youth homelessness, with family reunification being a very effective strategy in many cases.
- Prevention and early intervention depend on system-wide collaboration between government and non-government services. A special focus on youth leaving state care is warranted.
- Ongoing data collection is critical in identifying the needs of homeless youth and in designing effective responses.
- A central-intake system can dramatically improve both collaboration and data gathering.
- Community-wide systems such as central intake are best created through a collaborative, bottom-up approach, especially in a fragmented service system such as Vancouver's.
- Housing-first policies can have better long-term outcomes than approaches focused on preparing youth for long term housing through supportive housing and medical treatment.
- Because homeless youth have a wide range of needs, each community should work to provide a continuum of care that includes a range of complementary services.
- The appropriate mix of youth-specific services in a continuum will vary by region, but might include:
    - Emergency shelter
    - Long-term housing support
    - Subgroup-specific supports (such as for Aboriginal and LGBT youth)
    - Family mediation
    - Counselling
    - Education

- Skills training
- Employment opportunities
- Addictions treatment
- Mental-health services

Best Practices Highlighted by Vancouver Practitioners

- Continuum of care
- Housing-first policy
- Adequate, reliable funding
- Interpersonal relationships between clients and service providers
- Individualization of services
- Youth empowerment and supportive plans with attainable goals
- Case-management systems
- High level ongoing training for managers
- High degree of flexibility
- System of ongoing evaluation

Gaps in Vancouver's Youth-homelessness Approach

- Service fragmentation
- Inadequate transition services
- General lack of youth-specific services and housing
- Inflexibility
- Inconsistency in services due to unreliable funding
- Treating youth as a homogenous population with a one-fits-all policy
- Lack of services dedicated to dealing with unique aspects of overrepresented demographics

One of the fundamental lessons that came out of this research is that homeless youth are extremely diverse. The way they entered homelessness, their cultural background, their history with the state and other factors all determine what their needs are and what services are most effective. There is no single type of service that will work best for them all. So while there are many recommendations that could be made about which specific services and programs can be considered best practices, such recommendations are ultimately insufficient to address the problem.

Instead, a system-wide strategy is needed. This report recommends three broad principles that reflect the most effective strategies to reduce youth homelessness. Under each, we've listed a number of effective programs that could be implemented.

1. Increase collaboration between services and institutions targeting youth.
    - Promote strong links between government and non-government services for youth to encourage the identification of at-risk youth and referrals between services.
    - Develop a central intake system for all homeless services that can better connect youth to the right services.
    - Collect continual data on the needs of homeless youth (which can be facilitated through a central-intake system).

2. Invest in prevention and early-intervention strategies.
    - Collaboration between youth services should be matched with training to allow practitioners to identify at-risk youth and refer them to appropriate services.
    - Implement family programs that focus on counselling and reunification.

3. Prioritize youth as a distinct sub-group of people at risk of homelessness.
    - Agencies responsible for homelessness should create a targeted youth homelessness strategy.
    - Recognizing that homeless youth are a heterogeneous group, there should be an emphasis on an appropriate mix of services. This should include low-barrier emergency shelters, housing-first programs, education, skills training, employment placement, health services, harm reduction and counselling.

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Introduction

The objective of this study – which was developed by master's students from Simon Fraser University's School of Public Policy for BC Housing – is to describe an effective strategy for tackling youth homelessness in Vancouver. Our approach focuses on four key deliverables: 1) a literature review on youth homelessness, 2) a summary of successful youth-homelessness programs and policies, 3) three case studies of programs that effectively address youth homelessness, and 4) an inventory of services for homeless youth in Vancouver.

The process of selecting successful practices begins with a short review of the considerable literature on the subject. The literature reflects a general consensus on several important aspects of the problem, such as the diversity of the population, common causes and accepted strategies. Informed by these sources and by recommendations from policy-makers and practitioners in the field, we selected several practices to review from different Canadian cities (notably Calgary and Toronto) and comparable countries (Australia, the U.K. and the United States).

The study also includes a thorough review of the services available to homeless youth in Vancouver as well as input from Vancouver-area practitioners about what is working, what isn't and what still needs to be done. This data informs our final recommendations about what a strategy to address youth homelessness in Vancouver should include. (Our case studies and inventory of Vancouver services can be found in the appendices.)

Ultimately, our findings show that what's missing in Vancouver is not a specific service or policy, but a system-wide strategy to tackle youth homelessness. Our recommendations highlight three overarching principles that should guide such a strategy and a list of specific programs that would help deliver the objectives of each principle.

Background

Introduction

Recently, government programs in the U.S. and Canada have been developed to end homelessness. Some of these programs have a special emphasis on the unique issues facing homeless youth. The objective of most policies and programs geared at ending youth homeless are to provide youth with valuable life skills and halt the cycle of lifetime homelessness. This review summarizes the current state of youth homelessness in Canada (including counts and demographics), a summary of some of the theories that explain youth homelessness and accepted strategies to combat the problem.

Youth Profile

Homeless youth are most often defined as 16 to 24 years old. In Canada, according to federal estimates, the number of homeless individuals is about 150,000. It is estimated that roughly 65,000 young people are homeless or living in homeless shelters throughout the country at some point during the year (Evenson & Barr, 2009). A Canadian study from the Ministry of Health, Street Youth in Canada (2006), found that the ratio of males to females is approximately two to one. It also reported that approximately 15 percent of street youth reported that their families had been homeless. Conflict with parents was the principal reason most street youth reported for leaving home. The youth were of varied ethnic

backgrounds, with about 60 percent overall reporting Caucasian ethnicity and about 30 percent reporting Aboriginal ethnicity.

Demographics of Youth Homeless in Vancouver (See Appendix 1)
Although the 2011 homeless count in Vancouver showed an overall one-percent decrease since the 2008 count, there was a 29 percent increase in the number of homeless youth. A majority of these youth have dealt with numerous traumatic and challenging issues, including being kicked out of home, family breakdown and being in government care. A significant number of homeless youth have also self-identified their sexual orientation as LGBTQ. The primary reasons identified for being on the street included, "feel accepted here," "don't get along with parents," "travelling," "friends hang out on streets" and "kicked out of home" (Eberle Planning and Research, Kraus, D. & Woodward, J., 2007, p.10).

The Verdant Group conducted a study on homeless youth in Vancouver using a combination of service-provider records and a street survey. They found that most of the homeless youth in downtown in May 2000 were aged 19 to 24 years and approximately 70 percent were male. Fifteen percent were Aboriginal. In terms of home community, 25 percent were from the Lower Mainland.

The McCreary Centre Society surveyed 145 homeless and street-involved youth aged 12 to 19 years in Vancouver in 2001. They also interviewed 180 older youth aged 19 to 24 years. Both age groups had very high incidences of "ever being in government care." Forty-four percent of all Vancouver street youth under 19 and 52 percent of older youth aged 19 to 24 had been in care. Furthermore, 24 percent of all youth were originally from Vancouver. Fifty-one percent of youth aged 16 to 19 identified their sexual orientation as LGBTQ compared to 36 percent of older youth. Many of these street youth had faced severe life challenges such as being kicked out of their family home (61 to 69 percent) and being physically abused (71 percent). However, the authors caution that the youth who participated in the two surveys were not selected at random. The data also does not reflect the perspectives of youth who are not connected to or receiving help from youth-serving agencies.

The 2005 Homeless Count results were comparable. Of the 179 youth age 16 to 24 counted in Vancouver, 57 percent were male, 84 percent were older youth between the ages of 19 and 24, and 35 percent self-identified as Aboriginal. The 2005 count also found that homeless youth in Metro Vancouver also had high self-reported rates of addiction (56 percent) and mental illness (26 percent) (Eberle Planning and Research, Kraus, D. & Woodward, J., 2007, p.10).

Links to Youth Homelessness

Causes of homelessness among youth fall into three inter-related categories: family problems, economic problems and residential instability. According to a study by Toro, Dworsky and Fowler (2007), youth have consistently identified "conflict with parents and caregivers" as the primary reason for their homelessness and they tend to report more family conflict than their peers who are housed. It was also noted that these conflicts tend to reflect longstanding patterns rather than problems that arise just before youth leave home. Conflicts related to step-parent relationships, sexual activity, pregnancy, sexual orientation, school problems and alcohol or drug use are also commonly reported.

Many homeless youth report a history of out-of-home care placement. The percentage that report being placed in foster care or an institutional setting varies across studies; estimates range between 21 and 53 percent. Of particular concern in this regard is the experience of youth who "age out" of foster care when they turn 18 or, in BC, 19. These youth are expected to live independently and support themselves once they leave the child welfare system; however, they often lack the financial, social and personal resources needed to do so.

Another Canadian study by Evenson and Barr (2009) found similar results: 42 percent described growing up in a chaotic environment; 43 percent had previous involvement with Child Protection services; 68 percent had come from foster care, group homes or a youth centre; and 62 percent had dropped out of school. More than 50 percent of the youth reported drug and alcohol abuse and described addiction as a major factor in coping with homelessness as well as in triggering relapses to street life. Another possible relationship to homelessness that came out of this study was “street culture.” Close to 70 percent of the respondents reported that they participate in street culture, which commonly lasts for an extended period, often two to four years. These youths reported that they had become so entrenched in the street culture that it was hard for them to learn mainstream norms.

General Strategies to Reduce Youth Homelessness

A study by Toro, Lesperance and Braciszewski (2011) suggests that many studies fail to address the diversity of homeless youth. According to the authors, this lack of distinction between different subgroups of homeless youth has led to a body of literature which may not be addressing the problems and unique experiences of homeless youth that would be beneficial in designing and disseminating policy and services.

The Road to Solutions study by Evenson and Barr (2009) identifies three essential service and support system components that address the complex needs of street-involved youth in Canada: prevention, emergency response and transitions out of homelessness. Research shows that street-involved youth often require diverse, multi-faceted, intensive models of support, which may include appropriate, affordable housing, education, skills training, employment opportunities, health services, mentorship and much more (p. 8). Policies and services must therefore be integrated and culturally appropriate. The study asserts that without a national commitment to address youth homelessness, the numbers of street-involved youth will continue to grow. With this increase, the associated health-care, criminal-justice, social-services and emergency-shelter costs will also rise.

Furthermore, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA) outlines a series of strategies that must be used in order to have a comprehensive plan to end youth homelessness in Canada. They include early intervention, harm reduction, prevention, age- and diversity-appropriate solutions, youth engagement, and transformation of the process of exiting systems. They also suggest family reconnection, varied safe housing options, housing integrated with support services, training and employment opportunities, and key results such as measured outcomes, flexibility, and sustainability (Canada Housing and Renewal Association, 2011). According to the CHRA, this can only be accomplished through national and community collaboration of government ministries and programs, non-profit programs and services, and the youth themselves.

Conclusion

Youth at risk of homelessness are those experiencing family troubles and those exiting from care or corrections. Homeless youth are diverse, often lack “life” skills and can be entrenched in street life. The strategies used to end youth homelessness must match the diversity of youth and be comprehensive. The successful strategies and programs outlined in the findings section of this report echo the strategies outlined above, with emphasis on those that are collaborative, sustainable, flexible and have successful outcomes.

Methodology

Theory

This study's approach involves learning more about the systemic and policy factors that contribute to youth homelessness through:

- Identifying trends in youth homelessness in the City of Vancouver;
- Taking an inventory of current service and programs to prevent and address youth homelessness;
- Identifying policies, programs or initiatives that should be considered to prevent and address youth homelessness.

Trends of youth homelessness in Vancouver were determined through a review of the available literature. Researchers used academic search engines, Internet searches and targeted website review to access a wide range of available reports.

Researchers developed the inventory of current services and programs in Vancouver by accessing both websites that conglomerate data on services and the websites for the services themselves. This primary data was complimented with a handout from Broadway Youth Resource Centre and information collected from interviews.

The policies, programs and initiatives to address youth homelessness were identified from a review of recent literature, email communication, interviews, a Vancouver youth homeless forum and video footage from other conferences held on youth homelessness. The researchers then determined key individuals for interview to gather more in depth information about these practices.

Interview Approach

Participants

Participants were government and non-profit policy makers and service providers. Respondents were given the choice to participate and were offered the opportunity to have their name and organization included or excluded in the report. A total of eight individuals consented to in-depth interviews and eight others participated by providing information through e-mail correspondence. A total of thirty-two people were contacted. Those who were not willing to participate cited busy schedules and not being the right person to talk to as reasons they did not wish to participate.

Method

The method for data collection was semi-structured snowball interviews. Primary participants were identified from the literature. Those external to Vancouver were chosen

for their unique approaches and practices. Those within Vancouver were chosen for their proximity to youth homeless policy and service delivery. Researchers modified a generic form response identifying the purpose of the project. After the primary contact, participants were given the opportunity to recommend other individuals for inclusion in the study. In some cases, these individuals were contacted; in other cases, they were determined by the researcher to not be relevant to the subject matter. Interviews were conducted by telephone, by email or in person. In some cases, participants requested the questions ahead of time and thus were provided with a copy. Each researcher pulled questions from a previously determined set and also developed unique questions specific to the policy, program or initiative being discussed. The findings of the review of recent literature, email communication, interviews and conferences are outlined in the following sections.

Research Findings

International

Overview
In an effort to identify best practices from outside of Canada, we reviewed literature and engaged stakeholders from the U.S., the U.K. and Australia. A full review of the policies and services targeting homeless youth in these countries would require many volumes; therefore, this review will focus on recent high-level strategies that have emerged in these countries and select best practices that were recommended by practitioners in each.

Policies
Prevention has emerged as a policy priority in all three countries in recent years. Government plans and recommendations from NGOs fairly consistently state that prevention and early-intervention programs are effective but underutilized strategies. Another dominant theme in all three countries is co-ordination between government and non-government service providers. Perennial issues such as funding for supportive housing, general housing affordability and youth unemployment are also constants.

The U.S. government identifies youth as a special concern (U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2010); however, according to one federal official contacted in this study, there is a lack of national programs directly targeting this group (Ho, 2012). The United States has done important work to coordinate homelessness services in general at the community level, which is identified as an important part of a youth homelessness strategy by many researchers. One component is the “continuum of care” strategy begun by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the 1990s, which uses funding provisions to encourage communities to provide a complete range of homelessness services, including emergency housing, long-term housing, outreach and prevention (U.S. Department of Housing, 2002). The 2011 HEARTH Act continued the push for greater co-ordination, using similar funding provisions to expand the practice of centralized intake systems (described in more detail in the “Services” section below) and the use of widespread, standardized data gathering through the Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) (Walker, 2012).

In the U.K., the National Youth Homelessness Scheme, part of the Department for Communities and Local Government, helps coordinate government and non-government services for homeless youth. The agency's priorities are creating working partnerships with youth-focused government ministries and community services, and using these relationships

to support youth homelessness programs, with a current emphasis on prevention (see http://communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/strategy). One such effort was a 2008 strategy to coordinate between government housing services and children's services to prevent young people becoming homeless (Department for Communities, 2008). The national government made homelessness planning a priority in 2002. That year's Homelessness Act included a statutory requirement for all local authorities to conduct reviews of their homelessness services and produce strategies within one year. Comprehensive strategies to tackle youth homelessness, while not specifically asked for, were developed and enhanced in many communities.

In Australia, addressing youth homelessness through prevention has been a focus of the government since the late 1980s, following considerable research by government agencies (Department of Families, Housing, 2006). A comprehensive study of Australia's youth-homelessness problem published in 2008 by the National Youth Commission, a civil-society group, found that a decline in the homeless-youth count from 26,000 to 22,000 between 2001 and 2006 was largely due to the success of these programs (National Youth Commission, 2008). This accomplishment is in part due to the ability of government and NGOs to coordinate the efforts of various service providers who work with youth. One important institutional asset is Australia's network of school-based social workers, who play an important role in identifying, assisting and referring at-risk youth.

Services

There are thousands of programs and services for homeless youth in the countries examined. This review will highlight only a few notable services unique to each country, suggested by practitioners.

The use of central-intake systems is becoming an increasingly important part of the general homelessness strategy in the U.S. Central intakes serve as a single point of entry to a community's collection of homelessness services, eliminating the need for each service to manage its own intake process. The system reduces the demand placed on clients to navigate the homeless-services system on their own, something they are often ill equipped to do. Under a central-intake system, clients with specialized needs (such as Aboriginal youth or LGBT youth) are more likely to be referred to appropriate services. Centralizing the intake process also allows for more rigorous data collection on who accesses what service and why. (See Appendix 2B for a case study on Cincinnati's central-intake system.) The widespread rollout of central-intake and HMIS data-management systems has caused some concerns, particularly in terms of individual service providers' loss of independence and fears over a loss of personal privacy (Walker, 2012).

Historically, the U.K. is known for the "Foyer" model, a homelessness strategy pursued after the Second World War where shelter facilities also provided education and skills training. This emphasis on providing a holistic mix of services is well entrenched among U.K. service providers, according to practitioners contacted for this study. In recent years programs have been enhanced, with government support, to focus on prevention of as well as reaction to homelessness. One example of this is Safe Moves, a prevention program created in 2003 by the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Homelessness Scheme and the NGO Foyer Federation. The program seeks to identify young people at risk of homelessness through multi-agency collaboration and prevent homelessness though broad, multi-service support, including housing, counselling and skills development.

The most significant of Australia's early-intervention efforts is the national Reconnect program. Established in 1998, it focuses on early identification of at-risk youth and family mediation to prevent youth from leaving their family homes. This is only possible through

widespread co-ordination between community service providers, child services, the school system, the justice system and other government and non-government players. (See Appendix 2A for a case study on the Reconnect program.)

Conclusion
Youth homelessness has been identified as a serious problem in all three nations. Governments and NGOs in each have identified youth as a special population of homeless people in need of special intervention. Generally, the way homeless youth are understood in each country is consistent with the recent literature. There is widespread agreement about the causes of youth homelessness (such as family breakup and transition out of state care) and the needs of homeless youth (such as emergency shelter, skills training and family mediation). Likewise, the types of services offered in each country are broadly similar, including emergency shelter, counselling services, and long-term housing options. Prevention and service collaboration are the most prevalent trends in the most recent youth-homelessness strategies in these countries.

Canada

Overview
Canada is a diverse country with several municipalities facing unique climates, job markets, size and demographics. Homeless youth experience the impact of these differences depending on where they live. There are a wide variety of techniques and approaches to address youth homelessness employed in municipalities across Canada. This section outlines these policies and services.

Policies

Calgary (See Appendix 2C for a case study)
Calgary Homeless Foundation (CHF), an NGO, has developed a 10-year plan to end youth homelessness. "It is the first city-wide plan to end youth homelessness in Canada. Instead of an agency-led view of youth homelessness, the Youth Plan has a comprehensive systems view about young people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Strategies developed in the Youth Plan are underpinned by consultations and quality research about what works and what doesn't" (Calgary Homeless Foundation, p. 4). The plan was developed with the entire community through consultation and breaks programs into nine different types, determining what the expected outcomes are from each type.

The provincial government funds the plan, with $24.7 million provided for all Calgary homeless programs in 2011-12 from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. CHF also receives and administers funds from the Government of Canada's Homeless Partnering Strategy specifically on youth programs.

The plan incorporates a "housing-first" strategy, which entails providing stable or permanent housing as opposed to a focus on temporary shelter and treatment, with an integrated Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The overall plan is working, with an 11-percent decrease in homelessness in 2008 and a 24-percent decrease from what was expected based on projections. Numbers on youth specifically have not been released.

The Calgary Homeless Foundation also advocates for the use of an acuity scale for risk prioritization. Acuity allows a case manager to assess a person's level of vulnerability and this information can be used to prioritize them specifically for rehousing or services and programs. The CHF acuity scale is being piloted at the Alex Community Health Centre.

Toronto (See Appendix 2.D. for a case study)
Toronto has undergone a major paradigm shift in the way it addresses of street homelessness, moving toward a housing-first approach. Prior to 2001, the main focus of street outreach programs had been survival support (helping homeless individuals find temporary shelter and other medical and social supports). This was replaced by the housing-first approach in 2001, when the provincial government expanded its supportive housing system (housing geared towards homeless individuals as opposed to rent-support geared to income) in response to the recommendations made by the Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force. As a result, the supportive housing stock grew from 2,400 to 4,200 in the year 2000.

The new approach to street outreach entails using case-management strategies, where outreach workers are tasked with helping individuals get off the street and into shelter, housing or other suitable services. The rationale behind the approach is that homeless individuals will have a greater chance at improving their employment skills and addressing addiction and other health barriers once they have stable housing (City of Toronto, 2009).

The city's social housing agency, Toronto Community Housing Association (TCHA), has also changed its approach to youth homelessness. The agency is in the process of implementing a "Youth Investment Strategy." The plan's main focus is to build a stronger relationship between the city and community organizations. This includes working with community agencies to address service gaps. Another objective of the plan is to increase participation among its youth tenets with respect to programs and developmental activities. Implementation of this aspect of the plan entails annual youth tenet elections which allow 400 youth representatives to build leadership skills through representation of the 22,000 youth that live in TCHA housing stock.

Services
The City of Toronto's Streets to Homes Youth Program embodies Toronto's use of the housing-first approach. The program aims to reach street-involved youth and help them find stable housing. Four outreach workers are designated to work with street-involved youth and help them find housing through one of the program's partner agencies. The program also offers follow up services after clients are housed (see Appendix 2D for more detail).

Native Child and Family Services provides a drop-in service for First Nations youth to help them access housing and social services. This program is unique because it caters to First Nation youth and uses a case-management approach. The organization provides individual caseworkers that help direct First Nations youth to the appropriate housing and employment support through a personalized service plan. The drop-in centre also offers counselling support and employment training. The organization has a mission to foster positive self-esteem and empower Aboriginal youth to direct their own lives through life-skills training.

There are several programs across Canada that use an integrated, holistic approach to provide youth with support in areas of housing, employment, training and social support. These include Eva's Phoenix in Toronto, Phoenix in Halifax, and Choices for Youth in St. John's. These approaches focus on collaboration and sustainability of services. The Choices for Youth agency has found success in the Training for Trades program, a social enterprise modeled after Eva's Phoenix and Winnipeg's Warm-up Winnipeg. They provide training and employment for homeless youth who have complex needs and a high risk of a lifetime of homelessness. These youth, 10 per year, are given education to receive a GED as well as carpentry and construction training. They then complete energy retrofits in social housing. They complete approximately 60 units per year and the cost to the organization is around

$600,000. About 80 percent of participating youth go on to pursue a post-secondary education or find employment placements (Pollett, 2012).

Programs also exist in Canada to ensure that other provincial programs do not discharge into homelessness. The John Howard Society in Calgary works with those who previously would have been discharged from corrections into homelessness. They have temporary and permanent housing in place for approximately 100 people and work with youth towards a goal of self-reliance.

Conclusion

Policies and programs in Canada are often delivered on a municipal level. As a result, several municipalities have strategies in place to address youth homelessness. These broad policies include specific initiatives to address the multi-faceted aspects of youth homelessness. These initiatives have been identified as successful based on previous studies and international research. They include housing first, homeless management information systems, risk prioritization and case management. The successful services available in these municipalities include demographic-specific targeting, community participation in decision-making, holistic service collaboration, integrated education and employment services and smooth transitions from government systems.

Vancouver

Overview

Vancouver is a growing and diverse city with significant housing challenges. In order to develop a recommendation for youth homeless policy and programming in Vancouver, we interviewed government and non-governmental policy bodies and service providers in the city. What follows is a summary of the policies and services targeted at youth homelessness.

Policies

Federal

In 1999 the federal government introduced the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) as a result of pressure from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and other organizations. The federal government allocated funding for emergency shelters and support services for homeless populations through the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative (SCPI), a contribution program funded under the NHI. Approximately $25 million annually was allocated to the Greater Vancouver Region from 2000 to 2007 (Condon and Newton, 2007). Moreover, through the Youth Employment Strategy, the federal government allocated $59 million over three years to address homelessness among youth (Community Partnerships Initiative: Community Guide, 2000). In 2007 the federal government replaced the SCPI with the Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS). Since 2007 approximately $12 million to $15 million has been allocated annually under the HPS to Metro Vancouver.

Provincial

In British Columbia, under the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, the province works in partnership with local communities, the federal government and non-profit providers to develop new housing options to help individuals who are homeless or at risk move beyond temporary shelter to more secure housing. Through the provincial housing strategy, Housing Matters BC, the province has committed to developing more than 6,500 new and upgraded

supportive housing units and shelter beds (BC Housing, 2011). This initiative is funded in part through the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Initiative.

Housing Matters BC, which was initially released in 2006, outlines six key strategies that address the full "housing continuum," including high-level, moderate-level and low-level support services. This continuum ranges from emergency shelter and housing for the homeless to private market rentals and home ownership (see Appendix 3, Chart A). Additionally, as part the Provincial Homelessness Initiative, the province has also acquired 26 single-room-occupancy hotels to protect some of the existing affordable-housing stock and signed agreements with eight municipalities to develop over 2,300 new and supportive housing units.

MCFD

The Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD) released Strong, Safe and Supported in 2008 (MCFD, 2008). This document is a provincial strategy that includes five pillars of an effective child, youth and family development service system: prevention, early intervention, intervention and support, Aboriginal approach and quality assurance. The strategy highlights the Youth Agreements Program as a success to date in supporting high-risk youths between 16 to 18 years transition to adulthood (MCFD, 2008). These agreements include increased rent, subsidies in high rent areas, landlord/mentor assistance and more contracted youth workers to provide direct contact. Key actions for the intervention and support pillar include improving case-management systems and assessment models, providing improved support for caregivers and improving supports to children formerly in care and those in youth agreements transitioning to adulthood (MCFD, 2008).

Municipal

In June 2011, the City of Vancouver launched Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy: 2012-2021. The mission of this strategy is to create a city of communities, which cares about its people, its environment and the opportunities to live, work and prosper. The goals are to end street homelessness by 2015 and increase affordable housing choices for all Vancouverites. The report include three strategic directions: 1) Increase the supply of affordable housing, 2) encourage a housing mix across all neighborhoods that enhances quality of life, and 3) provide strong leadership and support partners to enhance housing stability (p.6). These directions address all points along Vancouver's own housing continuum, which consists of the range of housing options available to households of all income levels, extending from emergency shelter and housing for the homeless through to affordable rental housing and homeownership (See Appendix 3, Chart 2).

Services

The landscape of services in Vancouver includes a few key players and various smaller organizations with specialized and limited scope. This section will outline best practices, which exist in some, but not all, service providers in Vancouver. Though a service outlined below may exist in Vancouver, it may not exist in sufficient supply or adequately connect those in need to the best services for them. This lack of consensus and collaboration leads to the primary gap in services in Vancouver: fragmentation. This section will also address gaps in services as they arise.

Organizational Approach

Covenant House, one of Vancouver's primary service providers for homeless youth, credits its success to a variety of factors founded in adequate funding and effective management

oversight. All programs are structured on a continuum model so as to allow for seamless transition and predictable consistency, thereby allowing for greater effectiveness (Harvey, 2012). Similarly, Broadway Youth Resource Centre operates its services within a cohesive and inter-related system, ensuring client's needs are met through different aspects of the various services that exist under their umbrella. Service providers in Vancouver express frustration that no city-wide continuum exists to safeguard against clients falling between the cracks upon completion of one program or service while they are still in need of another (Youth Inclusion and Youth Homelessness Community Forum, 2012).

This absent continuum of care is a product of general fragmentation of services in the city. City-level disorganization has lead to a decreased return on investment in services. A system of collaboration would increase efficiency and effectiveness and decrease any sort of overlap. Efforts toward greater collaboration are being made, such as the National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness, a forum aimed at building capacity through collaboration. The forum provides a space for members nation wide to share strategies and best practices to increase effectiveness. Another important program built on a foundation of collaboration is Providence Health Care's Inner City Youth Mental Health Program. The program takes mental health and psychiatric services to the youth population and treats transient youth with substance use disorders. Begun in 2007 as a pilot project that linked psychiatrists from Vancouver's St. Paul's Hospital and youth at Covenant House Vancouver, it's now a formalized program that includes eight psychiatrists, a social worker and a coordinator. More recently, it has created partnerships with housing providers such as The City of Vancouver and BC Housing. Such movements toward collaboration are vital to the sector and must be fortified to succeed.

A further request for collaboration in Vancouver was expressed at the Youth Inclusion and Youth Homelessness Community Forum (2012). Participants envisioned a system that would allow for an organization without vacancies to easily determine which services do have vacancies. Service providers expressed a fear of situations in which clients in need are turned away from a service rather than being redirected to a more appropriate service due to lack of inter-organizational information. Additionally, service providers indicated that a collaborative system would contribute to efficiency gains within organizations, saving the time staff spend calling each other to receive consistent updates on vacancies. To maximize effectiveness, such a system of collaboration would include direct service providers and related stakeholders (Youth Inclusion and Youth Homelessness Community Forum, 2012).

Funding

The majority of programs dedicated to servicing homeless youth in Vancouver exist as quasi-independent organizations, funded through a combination of government and private sources. As such, varying degrees of independence exist from the government and the way that services are delivered differs with each service (Guenther, 2012). Covenant House is majority funded by private donations and receives only 15 percent of its funding in the form of government subsidies. They consider this a strength of the organization, as it allows for consistency of program delivery and grants them independence of organization and evaluation (Harvey, 2012). That stated, a frequent concern mentioned by service providers is a lack of adequate funding.

Diversity

Service providers and youth workers at the Youth Inclusion and Youth Homelessness Community Forum (2012) agree that improvements need to be made regarding treatment toward youth, recommending an individual relationship-based approach. They also

recommend that future policy development proceed with recognition that homeless youth are not a homogenous group; rather, they are a conglomeration of complex individuals and subgroups with different needs, each requiring a unique approach. Service providers indicate that improvement could be made in providing services for over-represented demographics that require unique approaches, such as youth who are LGBTQ, Aboriginal and addicted (Youth Inclusion and Youth Homelessness Community Forum, 2012).

This approach often requires a rethinking of eligibility criteria. Watari operationalizes this concept with a housing-first philosophy through its Transition to Independence Program (TIP). The program offers support and subsidies for clients to locate and maintain private market housing. The TIP program specifically aims to assist youth dealing with drug addiction. Program officers claim great success in many areas in a youth's life by including housing as the foundation upon which further developments can grow (Dustin, presentation, March 8, 2012).

Organizations such as Watari and Covenant House understand the importance of treating each youth as an individual. They stress forming realistic plans that work toward goals and outcomes individualized to what each youth is capable of achieving at the particular point in their life (Dustin, presentation, March 8, 2012). This contributes to youth empowerment. Relatedly, managers and youth workers need to be highly trained in order to effectively facilitate this and other programs, an aspect of effectively delivering services that those most effective organizations in Vancouver consider to be vital and easily adopted. These managers are often in charge of providing data and insights integral to conducting evaluations, another common practice of successful organizations in Vancouver (Harvey, 2012).

Discussion of the Findings

The international, Canada-wide and Vancouver findings outline a series of practices that result in a decrease in homeless youth. They also provide guidance on the potential barriers that can exist for youth to exit homelessness and access services. This section will outline these barriers in more detail.

Service providers and policy makers that were interviewed in this study consistently agreed that service fragmentation is one of the primary barriers to providing housing to homeless youth. Compared with most European nations, where social services developed as a government-run industry following the Second World War, Canada developed a mixed-model approach in which a variety of independent non-profits and government services arose to meet the growing need (Guenther, 2011, p. 2).

The problem of fragmentation of services makes for a lack of efficiency and effectiveness in a system that is already suffering from lack of resources. Here is one common example: A youth in immediate crisis approaches a shelter for a place to stay overnight and this shelter is full. The organization’s next step is to call around to try and find a free spot. In this scenario, it is easy for one free bed to be missed and the youth to spend the night on the streets, subsequently harming the youth. Additionally, it is a labour-intensive requirement for the youth worker in an industry where workers are already stretched thin. Although this is an example of a shelter problem, this scenario is common among youth who seek to access to employment training services, harm reduction and counselling.

Another common barrier identified by Vancouver service providers is a lack of available housing for youth. The wait-lists are long and by the time a youth qualifies for a spot, he or

she has often aged out of the system. Additionally, youth suffer from not being prioritized. Priority for housing is often given to disabled individuals, the elderly and families. This is a severe drawback in housing policy as youth are still developing and therefore prioritizing youth for housing will decrease the occurrence of youth who grow into chronically homeless adults.

Service providers and policy decision makers agree that a continuum, or breadth, of services is most effective for meeting the needs of homeless youth. They also stress that youth must be able to move up and down this continuum. In recent years, there has also has been a shift of focus away from youth homelessness to homelessness in general. Given that youth are an extremely unique and heterogeneous population, a one-size-fits-all policy will not be effective. Additionally, studies have found that shedding street ethics and beliefs are important for outreach and in getting youth off the street (Auerswald & Eyre, 2002). Furthermore, a large number of homeless youth have aged out of the foster care system, revealing an inadequate transition process. To date, there have been no partnerships between services providers and MFCD on a strategy to deal with young people who are "falling between the cracks."

Other barriers include funding, as youth housing is exponentially more expensive that adult housing because of staffing costs (Hemmingson, 2012). It's also difficult to house youth because of landlord discrimination, drug and alcohol abuse, age and eligibility issues, mistrust and alienation from mainstream society, high rent, low income, and low rental vacancies in Vancouver (Hemmingson, 2012 & Himenez, 2012).

Conclusion

Based on our research and interviews with policy decision makers and service providers, there was a unilateral agreement that any strategic policy targeted at youth homelessness in Vancouver must include emphasis on prevention and early intervention. As such, MFCD must be involved in the development of more supportive housing units (Himenez, 2012). As youth are a heterogeneous group (including diversity of age, sexuality, cultural identity, parenthood, and those with dog and cat companions), a variety of housing models are needed. In addition to stable housing, policy level decision makers emphasize the importance of life skills and job skills training for youth (Hemmingson, 2012).

According to policy-level decision makers interviewed in this study, what is most important is increased integration of service providers. There are a high degree of differences in the type of services required for homeless youth compared to other homeless populations. Thus, a housing model for youth should incorporate a housing-first approach and the provision of on-site support services in order to help young people adjust to independent living.

The following lists represent a summary of all of our findings:

Lessons From the Literature and Other Jurisdictions

- Prevention and early intervention are feasible and highly effective methods for reducing youth homelessness, with family reunification being a very effective strategy in many cases.
- Prevention and early intervention require system-wide collaboration between government and non-government services. A special focus on youth leaving state care is warranted.
- Ongoing data collection is critical in identifying the needs of homeless youth and in designing effective responses.

- A central-intake system can dramatically improve both collaboration and data gathering.
- Community-wide systems such as central intake are best created through a collaborative, bottom-up approach, especially in a fragmented service system such as Vancouver's.
- Housing-first policies can have better long-term outcomes than approaches focused on preparing youth for long term housing through supportive housing and medical treatment.
- Because homeless youth have a wide range of needs, each community should work to provide a continuum of care that includes a range of appropriate services that, ideally, work together help homeless youth overcome the barriers that prevent them from being housed.
- The appropriate mix of youth-specific services in a continuum will vary by region, but might include:
    - Emergency shelter
    - Long-term housing support
    - Subgroup-specific supports (such as for Aboriginal and LGBT youth)
    - Family mediation
    - Counselling
    - Education
    - Skills training
    - Employment opportunities
    - Addictions treatment
    - Mental-health services

Best Practices Highlighted by Vancouver Practitioners

- Continuum of care
- Housing-first policy
- Adequate, reliable funding
- Interpersonal relationships between clients and service providers
- Individualization of services
- Youth empowerment and supportive plans with attainable goals
- Case-management systems
- High level ongoing training for managers
- High degree of flexibility
- System of ongoing evaluation

Gaps in Vancouver's Youth-homelessness Approach

- Service fragmentation
- Inadequate transition services
- General lack of youth-specific services and housing
- Inflexibility
- Inconsistency in services due to unreliable funding
- Treating youth as a homogenous population with a one-fits-all policy
- Lack of services dedicated to dealing with unique aspects of overrepresented demographics

Recommendations

The policies chosen globally and in Vancouver to address youth homelessness must be both focused and diverse. Based on our analysis, it is clear that there is no simple approach to tackling youth homelessness in Vancouver. In light of the challenges and barriers, this study proposes a layered approach with three overarching principles designed to address the identified barriers preventing youth from becoming stably housed in Vancouver. While each option is designed to address a specific barrier, these options are not mutually exclusive and can be implemented in combination with each other. The recommendations discussed below provide the building blocks to construct a comprehensive youth homelessness strategy on a citywide and province-wide basis.

1. Collaboration of services

Collaboration of policies and services is required at all levels of the housing and service continuum. A collaboration of services allows service providers to connect youth with individualized services and also allow for the collection and sharing of data between non-government and government service providers to observe trends and develop a systematic understanding of needs and causes. The data could be used to help agencies develop programming, evaluate services, measure outcomes and demonstrate effectiveness. Consequently, this could help to attract stable funding, new connections and new partnerships.

A collaboration of services would entail four steps: (1) development of a database system, (2) implementation of a central intake system (3) a referral/case management system, and (4) a community continuum of care.

As evidence by the experiences of the U.S. and Calgary, the adaptation of the Homelessness Management Information Systems (HMIS) has been extremely successful in encouraging a centralized intake process and in collecting and sharing of data. A central intake service serves as a single point of entry to a community's collection of homelessness services. Case management is a model where staff works together to transition youth from street life to independent living. In this model, the staff would arrange meetings with the youth to develop short term and long-term goals, use an acuity scale to assess services needs, and provide ongoing review and monitoring to ensure success. The last step in this option is the adoption of a continuum of care model, which emphasizes the availability of a breadth of services (emergency housing, long term housing, addiction treatment, employment training, counselling etc.).

This option would also allow a dialogue process between the children's, health, and housing ministries, the City of Vancouver, the non-profit sector and service providers to develop an outcome-based measurements to evaluate the success of the system in housing homeless youth. The literature suggests that shared-outcome measurement systems can be an effective tool in facilitating coordination and integration. According to the Road to Solutions study by Evenson and Barr (2009, p. 27) the development of data systems and collection of data related to youth homelessness is important in creating a body of statistics and laying the groundwork for evidence-based programming.

Recommendation:

Given that all service providers and policy-level decision makers identified fragmentation of services as the primary barrier to successfully delivering services to homeless youth, steps

towards a collaborative system which overcomes such fragmentation would be the most efficient, effective and, feasible option to address this barrier. BC Housing should take a leadership role in newly developed collaborative dialogues with housing and service provider partners in Vancouver and nationwide. Additionally, BC Housing, in partnership with the City of Vancouver, should support and initiate the development of a central intake system and database, similar to that which has worked in Calgary and Toronto. This program must be developed with a bottom-up approach involving relevant stakeholders from the beginning of the process. Deliberation about how the system will work and what data it will collect is key to a successful outcome. This system would encourage a citywide continuum of care by directing youth to the available service most suited to their need. It would ensure youth do not slip between the cracks or miss out on available services. Furthermore, the system would be able to identify youth at the start of their use of services and perhaps be able to provide assistance before they become entrenched, thereby also promoting the principle of early intervention.

2. Prevention/early intervention

This option requires institutionally coordinated and targeted initiatives aimed at homeless or formerly homeless young people transitioning to independence. A prevention/early intervention program first entails identifying at-risk youth early (before they leave home, foster care or juvenile detention centers). This step relies heavily on the collaboration of all services that have contact with at-risk youth. The next step is intervention, which, where possible, should focus on stabilizing existing home situations through methods appropriate to each person's individual needs, which might include family mediation or group counselling.

The importance of prevention and early intervention in dealing with youth homelessness has been supported by significant research. The research suggests that Vancouver's street-involved youth population is unlikely to become permanently housed without an integrated strategy governing youth's transitions from care. Therefore, it is important for government systems, such a hospitals, psychiatric facilities and detention facilities, to be attuned to the risk of discharging young people into homelessness and for workers in these agencies to be able to instead direct at-risk youth to the appropriate services. The advantage of a prevention and early-intervention strategy is that it builds on individual and collective strengths by protecting children, youth and families from further vulnerability, which lessens the likelihood of more intrusive intervention measures.

Recommendation:

Begin system-wide discussions with all institutions that have contact with at-risk youth, in particular the Ministry of Child and Family Development, to develop protocols for identifying youth at risk of homelessness, assessing the level of risk they face and introducing them to appropriate support services. Discussion should also focus on developing a school-based prevention system- similar to the school based programs in Australia.

3. Prioritize youth

This principle entails prioritizing youth homelessness separately from the general category of homelessness. This requires a focus on risk assessment, education, employment and life skills training programs, a housing-first approach that includes low-barrier emergency shelter, specialized shelters (such as for LGBT youth), adding more long-term affordable housing, redistributing current housing capacity to accommodate youth, counselling services, addiction treatment and mental health services for youth.

Given that youth represent an extremely heterogeneous population with a variety of

needs, youth that are homeless or at-risk of homelessness need to be distinguished from general homelessness policies and programs. Youth often find themselves marginalized, trapped in a situation where they have "outgrown" youth services while concurrently being too young to access adult subsidized housing and income assistance (Millar, 2009). Prioritizing youth will lead to a decreased adult homeless population in the future and significantly reduce government costs over the lifetime of the previously homeless youth.

Recommendation:
Prioritize youth on BC Housing's wait list to receive housing assistance. Youth are unique from adults in that they only remain youth for a short amount of time. Including youth on the same wait list for housing assistance as the general population often sees them age out before receiving assistance. To address the needs of youth in their formative years before reaching adulthood (by which time they may have developed into chronically homeless adults), greater steps need to be taken to ensure they have improved access to the limited supply of housing.

Next Step

BC Housing should partner with the City of Vancouver to develop and implement a Vancouver-wide central intake system through the development and implementation of an electronic database (HMIS). The collaborative stakeholder engagement that leads to the development of a database system will address the issue of service fragmentation in Vancouver. The system itself is expected to decrease levels of youth homelessness; it will enable all services to operate more efficiently, including those prevention and prioritization services.

Conclusion

The overarching message that emerged from the research is that homeless youth are not all the same; there is no simple list of services that can solve the problem of young people without stable housing. The challenge Vancouver faces in terms of addressing youth homelessness is not the absence of a specific service, but rather the lack of a consistent, system-wide strategy that makes the most of the services that already exist. Because youth experiencing homelessness will each have a mix of needs unique to them, the best support strategy is to work with them as individuals, helping them move through a collaborating system of different services with the end goal of helping them achieve stable housing. To achieve this, system-wide cooperation is key.

Another reason to strongly push for greater collaboration is the challenge of identifying at-risk youth early. The research suggests that these youth are identifiable, and that the institutions they interact with – be it schools, child protection services or the police – can determine who might become the next young person without a home. When that happens, those workers should have the capacity to intervene and connect these young people with the services they need. Preventing youth from becoming homeless in the first place is both the appropriate moral response and more economically efficient than simply dealing with those who have already become homeless and street involved.

One of the greatest challenges in addressing youth homelessness is that they are at the same time distinct from other homeless populations and diverse amongst themselves. These insights suggest two conclusions: youth homelessness should be a recognized priority population within the greater homelessness discussion while not being treated as a homogenous group. The services they require must be distinct from other populations such as adults and families, but a one-size-fits-all approach will not be effective. A successful youth-homelessness strategy will have mechanisms that can identify the specific needs of the homeless-youth population and respond with targeted services.

This study finds that a strategy to tackle youth homelessness should be designed along three guiding principles: system-wide collaboration, prevention and early intervention, and prioritizing youth. Each principle identifies a distinct element of the youth-homelessness problem, and they are also highly interrelated. Improvements in one area will encourage improvements in the other two, making a holistic, effective youth-homelessness strategy achievable.

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Appendix 1

Profile of Homeless and At Risk Youth

Characteristics	Verdant 2000 Under 25 %	McCreary 2001 Under 19 %	McCreary 2002 19-24 years %	2005 Count 16-24 years %
Male	70	57	67	57
Female	30	43	32	41
Other				1
13-15 yrs				1
16-19 yrs		16		15
19-24 yrs	67-74			84
Aboriginal	15	38	35	35
LGTBQ		51	36	
Ever in government care		44	52	
Aged out of care			28	
Have child/children		14	26	
From this area	25	24	24	37
Have pet(s)			13	
Ever kicked out of home		69	61	
Ever runaway from home		82	63	
Physically abused		71	71	
Addiction problem		47	44	
Fetal alcohol syndrome		11	12	
Serious mental illness		31	27	

*Eberle Planning and Research, Kraus, D. & Woodward, J., 2007, p.9

Appendix 2: Case Studies

A. Australia

The Reconnect Program

Overview

Reconnect is a national program managed by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The program seeks to prevent youth homelessness by identifying at-risk youth early, preferably before they leave their family home, and either helping them stabilize their current home environment or achieve stable independent housing. This is accomplished through a wide range of services, with an emphasis on family mediation and reconciliation.

The Reconnect program was established in 1998 following a two-year pilot project. The importance of early intervention and prevention in dealing with youth homelessness was highlighted by significant research in the 1990s. The program targets youth aged 12 to 18 and their families. It serves between 5,500 and 6,000 clients a year across the country. In 2008 there were 98 Reconnect services staffed by 200 workers.

Intake

A significant challenge in preventing youth homelessness is identifying at-risk youth early and offering appropriate intervention quickly. The Reconnect program relies on referrals from a wide range of government and non-government organizations. Building and maintaining close collaboration with the education system, child protection agencies, the justice system, local government agencies, community groups and other youth service providers is an important part of the program's strategy.

A 2003 review of the program found that roughly 20 percent of referrals came from the school system, another 20 percent came from families and 12 percent came from a government multi-service portal called Centrelink. First contact with clients through the school system is an important part of the success of the Reconnect program. Australian research has found that a majority of youth who become homeless have significant difficulties in school, which suggests that at-risk youth can be identified through the education system. The Australian public school system includes a network of school-based social workers who are an important resource for referring cases to Reconnect.

Approach

The program identifies several successful outcomes, including helping youth stay in their family home when appropriate or transitioning to independent living when reunification is not possible. Its delivery model is based on seven key principles:

- Accessibility, which includes the ability to offer services quickly.
- Client-driven service, which emphasizes flexibility based on client needs.
- Holistic service delivery, which emphasizes the ability to offer a wide range of services.
- Collaboration, specifically with other youth-focused services.
- Cultural and context-appropriate services. For instance, Indigenous youth make up a disproportionately large part of Australia's homeless youth population, and the Reconnect program recognizes their need for specialized services.

- Ongoing review and evaluation. The Reconnect program was designed with an emphasis on ongoing data collection and evaluation.
- Sustainable support, which emphasizes helping clients build connections with people and community groups outside of the Reconnect program to help ensure long-term housing stability.

Primary services provided by Reconnect include counselling, family mediation and group work. An important element of the program is that it seeks to include the families of at-risk youth as well as the youth themselves. The program acknowledges that family reunification is not always possible in cases where there's been severe relationship breakdown. However, even in these cases the family can sometimes become an important partner in helping youth establish sustainable independent living.

While family mediation is the principle tool of the program, Reconnect emphasizes that the services provided should match the needs of the client. Services such as cultural-specific couselling, recreational programs, therapy and educational programs are also offered. Reconnect staff are also encouraged to refer clients out to other government or community services if these can meet a specific need.

Results

A 2008 report on the state of youth homelessness in Australia produced by a civil-society group called the National Youth Commission found that the number of homeless youth (aged 12 to 18) declined from 26,060 in 2001 to 21,940 in 2006. This drop was attributed largely to successful prevention programs in the country, of which the Reconnect program is the most significant. The Commission recommended that the Reconnect program be expanded and enhanced to provide more services to youth in more communities.

A 2003 review of the Reconnect program concluded that it has been highly successful in preventing at-risk youth from becoming homeless, largely by helping stabilize family home environments. Three quarters of youth and families who went through the program reported that it had helped improve the situations that caused them to seek assistance, with many youth and parents citing a reduction in family disputes and an improvement in conflict-resolution skills. As well, youth involved in the program have displayed improved attitudes toward school.

Reconnect relies on collaboration with other youth-oriented services and has worked to strengthen these relationships. A parallel benefit to this effort has been an improvement in the coordination of the youth-focused service sector generally. Reviewers of the program have found that Reconnect has increased the capacity of the sector overall.

Challenges facing the program include incomplete national coverage (many communities do not have access to a Reconnect office) and a lack of resources to deal with demanding cases, specifically those that involve multiple problem areas and require a broad mix of services. Particularly, there is a lack of Indigenous-focused services.

Appendix 2: Case Studies

B. Cincinnati

Central Access Point

Overview

Central Access Point (CAP) is a central-intake system that has been operating in the Cincinnati region since March 2008. CAP staff (four full-time and two part-time workers) receive phone calls from people wishing to access homelessness services, screen them, enter their information into a database and refer them to appropriate services in the community. The system receives real-time updates about space availability from all participating service agencies, and staff have in-depth knowledge about the objectives and specialties of each. This allows CAP staff to make timely referrals that match the needs of those seeking assistance.

A collective of family-focused emergency shelters that began in 1999 created the system. Startup funding for the system was a $100,000 donation from a single community donor. The system is now overseen by Strategies to End Homelessness, an organization that manages the Cincinnati area's Continuum of Care (a regional collection of homelessness services that receives funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development). The system costs roughly $200,000 a year to run, and is supported by private donation, funding from federal and local governments, and through fees paid by participating service organizations.

Approach

Before CAP was implemented, families that needed emergency housing had to call each shelter one at a time looking for available spaces. If unable to find a space, they would often have to go through the entire process again the next day. Shelter staff spent much time fielding these calls. Using CAP, families all call a single help line and speak with staff who can refer them to shelters that have the space to accommodate them as well as the services to meet their needs. This reduces the time spent by clients trying to find space and the time spent by shelter workers fielding phone calls and doing intake procedures.

The system relies on continual collaboration between CAP and its member agencies. Participating services must continually update the centre on their capacity in real time, and the CAP referral specialists need to be trained on each service's objectives, target population and intake procedures. CAP's procedures state that a coordinator must visit each participating service at least once per year. Community services that are not part of CAP have also benefited from the system by being able to direct cases to the system that they are not able to handle themselves.

In addition to referrals, CAP staff collect demographic information about each person who contacts them and their reason for seeking assistance. This information is forwarded to the appropriate service organization when a referral is made. Staff also record the services each client accesses, generates a record of all the services provided to each person over time. This data-gathering allows the centre to generate a robust knowledge base about who is accessing homelessness services, what services they need and even people's long-term experiences of homelessness. This data has been used for region-wide forecasting and planning, helping inform operational decisions such as staffing levels.

Originally designed for a network of family shelters, CAP is expanding its scope, having included a single men's shelter and a youth shelter. CAP managers are working to further expand the system, including more and more types of services.

Results

CAP has improved the efficiency of the intake process for its participating service organizations and for clients by being able to refer those needing assistance to organizations with the space to accommodate them. The number of beds lying vacant has decreased since the system came on line. In addition, the system has increased the quality of referrals, by being able to match clients with services that meet their needs, and has created a new method for referring people into homelessness prevention programs. For instance, families who are at risk of homelessness and contact CAP can be referred to rapid-rehousing programs, so that people who are not yet homeless are put into contact with long-term stable-housing programs before they even enter an emergency shelter.

One of the significant challenges the program faces is capacity to field calls during peak hours, when the wait times to speak with staff can be too long for those who have limited phone access.

Appendix 2: Case Studies

C. Calgary

Calgary Homeless Foundation

Overview

Calgary Homeless Foundation operates similarly to BC Housing, in that they prepare a plan for housing and service funding, submit it to the province, and receive funding from the province to enact the plan. However, Calgary Homeless Foundation is a non-profit. They are able to fundraise, lobby, use social media, and bring private sector individual into the policy process. The provincial government has a plan to end homelessness for the province and is committed to the cause. Their provincial plan is designed to support local community plans and act in areas with provincial jurisdiction. CHF received $17.2 million in 2010 and $24.7 million in 2011 from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs to provide, coordinate, and evaluate housing outreach and support services. They fund housing first programs through 23 different agencies with approximately 80 different programs.

Plan to End Youth Homelessness

Calgary is the only city in Canada that has developed a citywide plan to end youth homelessness (Calgary Homeless Foundation, 2011). This plan, released in summer 2011, is unique because it seeks to comprehensively address all aspects of youth homelessness. It consists of three strategies that attempt to address youth homelessness. The overall plan uses strategies that are focused and creative. The first strategy is to develop *a coordinated system* that:

- Builds system initiatives to prevent youth homelessness;
- Ensures zero discharge into youth homelessness;
- Creates innovative emergency shelter outreach services;
- Develops services for youth who are chronically and episodically homeless; and
- Encourages innovative, coordinated and targeted initiatives aimed at homeless or formerly homeless young people transitioning to independence.

The second strategy is to develop an adequate number of housing units and supportive homes dedicated to current youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness, by:

- Adding housing for youth who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness; and
- Working with the government to create family-style homes.

The third strategy is to improve data systems knowledge and influence public policy by:

- Implementing the HMIS (Homeless Management Information System);
- Gaining a detailed understanding of youth homelessness;
- Advocating for a provincial effort to end youth homelessness;
- Adopting an inclusive definition of youth homelessness;
- Encouraging more Children and Youth Services support for homeless youth under 18;
- Building income supports for young people transitioning into independence; and
- Providing more access to post-secondary education.

HMIS

The HMIS is a huge component of the plan. It is an electronic web-based system that collects consistent information about Calgary's homeless population throughout the system of care.

However, it is not only a data tool, it is an infrastructure of a system of care. The HMIS was developed through a bottom-up process of community engagement. Tim Richter, CEO of the Calgary Homeless Foundation, says that this system in particular works because of the bottom-up approach. Tim argues that if a government were to present the community with a system and say "here is the system, use it," the government won't have buy in and will have quality concerns with the data (Richter, 2012). The community process in Calgary involved the government, service providers, homeless, and other stakeholders to develop exactly what the system should look like, including the privacy model, the governance, and technology requirements.

The actual system used is Service Point by Bowman Systems (http://bowmansystems.com/products/servicepoint) and is commonly used by HUD in the US. It costs the CHF about $230,000 per year in licensing and about $70,000 per year for staff. In the long-term, the HMIS will develop into a referral system as well: police will see a homeless person on the street and will be able to look in the system to see if there is a shelter space available. There are currently 25 agencies using it, however, those who are not funded by the CHF are also keen to implement it as well.

The HMIS is engineered to complete the following:

1. Collect system-wide, standardized data for accurate, real-time reporting on the total number of homeless in Calgary, the length and causes of their homelessness, and their demographic characteristics and needs;
2. Better understand people's longitudinal homeless experiences by tracking the services they receive throughout the duration of their homeless episode(s);
3. Enable agencies to better meet clients' needs by improving service co-ordination, determining client outcomes, providing more informed program referrals and reducing their administrative burden;
4. Improve research for evidence based decision making, such as program design and policy proposals; and
5. Help shorten the length of time people are homeless and direct them through the system of care more efficiently and with more understanding.

(http://calgaryhomeless.com/what-we-do/hmis/)

Prioritize Risk Prevention

The Calgary Homeless Foundation is also working with the University of Calgary to develop The Risks and Assets for Homelessness Prevention (HART) Tool. They have determined that homelessness is predictable and that cases can be ranked. In order to end youth homelessness, they believe that early intervention is key, as there is a prevalence of family issues, and mainstream systems reform is necessary; government systems must be attuned to their role in discharging people into homelessness.
(http://calgaryhomeless.com/assets/research/HARTDecember112009.pdf)

Prioritize High Risk – Acuity Scale

Tim Richter of the CHF recommends that governments with few resources and long waiting lists for services prioritizes housing towards those people with the greatest need (Richter, 2012). They are doing a pilot project with an acuity scale, prioritizing those with who experience mental health issues, addiction, and disability. This puts the current system to best use. (http://calgaryhomeless.com/agencies/)

Appendix 2: Case Studies

D. Toronto

Housing First Approach

Overview

As Canada's largest metropolitan region, Toronto is not immune to the challenges associated with youth homelessness. Toronto's homeless population increased by 400 percent between 1980 and 2000 (Falvo, 2009). The last two citywide homeless counts (2006) enumerated 5052 and 5086 homeless people living on the streets, shelters, treatment facilities and correctional facilities, indicating that the number has remained stable since 2006 (Toronto, 2009). The same count reported a drastic decrease in the number of homeless individuals living outdoors (51 percent), including a 7 percent decrease in the under 21-age category and an 8 percent decrease in the 21-30 age range (City of Toronto, 2009).

City officials point to a radical shift in the city's approach to homelessness to explain this change. Prior to 2001, Policy responses focused primarily on treatment support and short-term shelter. However, as the homeless population continued to rise the city began to experience unbearable strain on the shelter system. By 1988, Toronto had roughly 2100 shelter beds open each night (which was at or near capacity). That number swelled to 3500 by 1996 (Falvo, 2009). Accordingly, the city's budget grew from $38 million in 1992 to $56 million in 1997.

In response to the failure of the "treatment approach," Toronto underwent a major paradigm shift in the way it addresses the issue of street homelessness. Prior to 2001 the main focus of street outreach programs had been survival support (helping homeless individuals find temporary shelter and other medical and social supports). This approach was replaced by the housing first approach in 2001, when the provincial government expanded its supportive housing system (housing geared towards homeless individuals as opposed to rent-geared to income) in response to the recommendations made by the Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force. The new approach to street outreach entails a case management approach where outreach workers are tasked with helping individuals get off the street and into shelter, housing or other suitable services. The rationale behind the approach is that homeless individuals will have a greater chance at improving their employment skills, and addressing addiction and other health barriers once they have stable housing (City of Toronto 2009).

Streets to Homes Youth Program

One of the first major programs designed to address street homelessness using the housing first approach is the Streets to Homes program operated by the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration. The program began in 2005 with an initial operating budget of $4 million, as a response to a series of unique events that raised alarm at the plight of homeless individuals in Toronto (Falvo, 2008). The goal of the program is to help homeless people find housing, keep it and help them integrate into the community. Outreach workers approach homeless individuals on the street and provide information about housing options. Those individuals that show an interest in being housed are enrolled in the program and staff accompanies them to see housing units. After a lease is signed a follow up support worker is assigned to the case for a 12-month period. The program funds 29 partner agencies to help them deliver its services. The city has also signed agreement with several non-partner agencies, including private landlords (who offer Streets to Homes clients with subsidized rental units in exchange for a pay-direct arrangement for rent). The

Streets to Homes Program highlights the successful use of the housing first approach, community collaboration, outreach and individualized case management and follow up supports as mechanisms to address youth homelessness.

Results

As of 2008, the streets to youth program had housed roughly 600 homeless individuals a year since its inception in February 2005 (Falvo, 2008). 115 of those individuals have been youth (aged 15-25). A post occupancy survey conducted in 2007 revealed several positive results. These include:

- 87 percent of those housed remain housed for the duration of the follow-up period.
- Improvements in health, the amount and quality of food being consumed, levels of stress, personal safety and mental health (City of Toronto ,2007).
- Increased in use of routine health services such as family doctors, dentists and psychiatrists after being housed (Toronto, 2007).
- An increase in the use of job training and education services after being housed.
- Decreases in arrests and a reduction in those detained in jail after being housed.

Though the results suggest that the housing first approach does significantly improve the lives of those living on the street; it is unclear how the program impacts youth homelessness. Only 13 percent of the survey respondents were aged 25 and younger, hence it is unclear if the benefits of the program are being enjoyed by youth. However, there is evidence to suggest that the program has contributed to a significant decrease in the youth street homeless population. The 2009 streets needs assessment showed a 51 percent decrease in street homelessness. The report also noted a 7 percent decrease from 2006 in the outdoor homeless population aged under 21 and an 8 percent decrease in the 21-30 age group (City of Toronto, 2007).

The program is not without its challenges. Since there is no requirement for a rent to income cutoff, clients often spend upwards of 41 percent of their income on rent. Sixty-eight percent of clients pay rent through Ontario Works, and thus many have as little as $100 left to spend after rent. Two thirds of respondents in the post-occupancy survey reported not having enough money left over for food. This is represented in a 55 percent increase in the amount of people using food banks (City of Toronto, 2007).

Furthermore, post occupancy research indicated problems with shared accommodations (39 percent of clients are in some form of shared accommodations). Those in shared accommodations were more likely to get arrested and use emergency services (Falvo, 2008). Those in shared accommodations were also more likely to report a lack of improvement in the amount of food they ate. The benefits were also less pronounced for Aboriginal people (City of Toronto, 2007).

Community Collaboration

The program successfully applies community collaboration methods to address youth homelessness. Youth are directed to one of several partner organizations that provide youth services. Staff also help to provide linkages to organizations that are not funded through the program. These organizations help youth access housing and provide follow-up supports once they are in their homes.

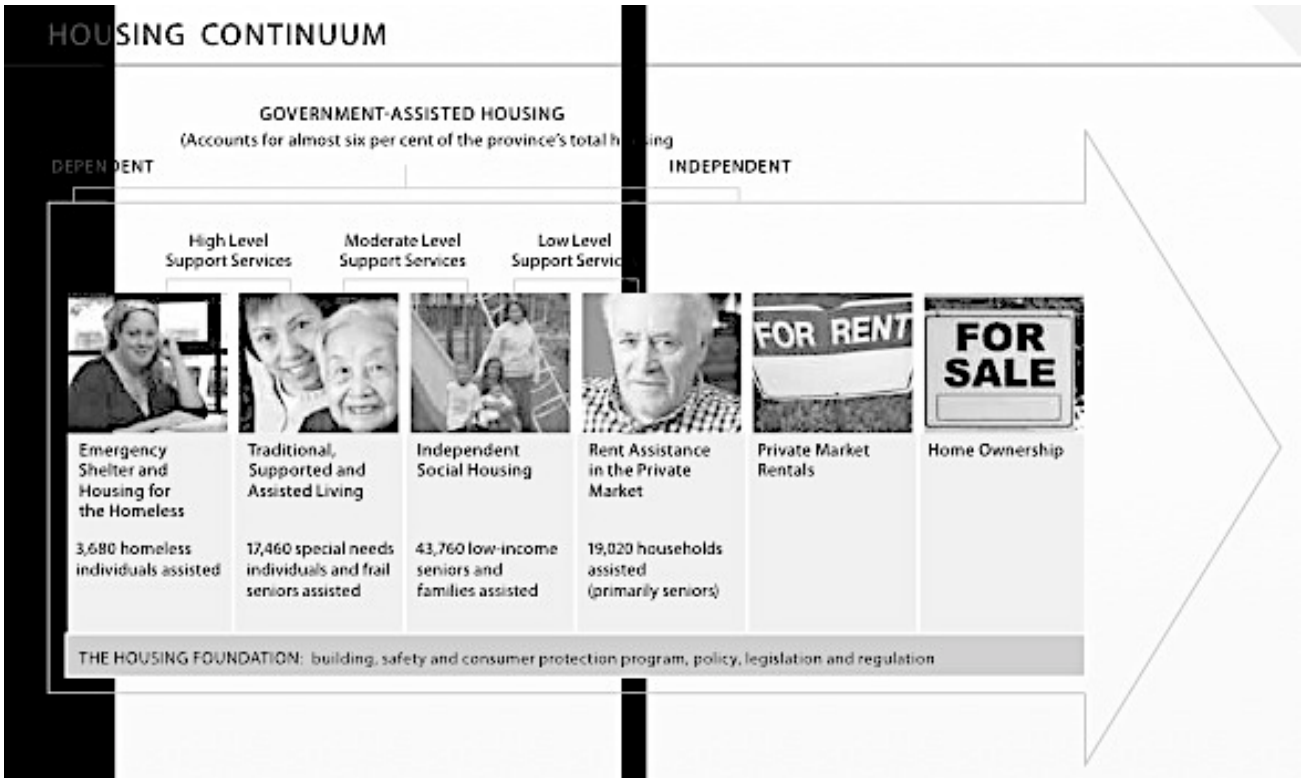
These community partnerships allow staff to connect clients to appropriate housing and social services in a timely manner (for example, the agreement with Toronto Community Housing stipulates that Streets to Homes clients are moved to the front of the social housing waiting lists). It should be noted that the market conditions in Toronto are favourable to the program. High vacancy rates in the city at the time of the program's inception (4.3%)

allowed for staff to utilize the private rental market as a housing option. Staff members were able to recruit private landlords to the program by offering modest rent supplements. The supplements offered by the Toronto program are roughly half that of Calgary's program which offers $700-800 per month (Falvo, 2008). Thus, municipalities with lower vacancy rates will find it more difficult to find private sector partners, which are a vital aspect of the success of the program.

Appendix 3

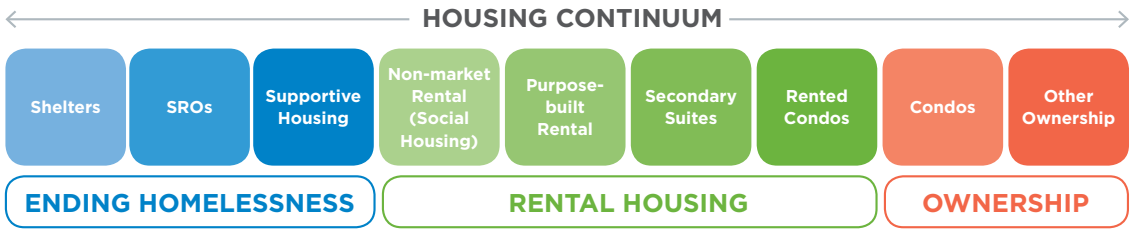
Housing Continuum

Chart A:



(Housing Matters BC, 2011, p. 3)

Chart B:



(Vancouver's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2012-2021, p. 7)

Appendix 4

Service Inventory of Programs in Vancouver

Institution	Program	Ages Served	Services Offered	Hours	Requirements	More Info	Contact Info
Covenant House (I)	Crisis Shelter	16-22	3 meals, 54-bed crisis shelter;	24 hours	12 hours clean	http://www.covenanthousebc.org/crisis_shelter	604-685-7474
Covenant House (II)	Community Support Services	16-24	Street outreach (food, counselling, minor medical attention), daily drop-in and housing support workers		Difficulty accessing social services	http://www.covenanthousebc.org/what/css	604-638-4438 info@covenanthousebc.org 575 Drake Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 4K8
Covenant House (III)	Rights of Passage (ROP)	Up to 24	Transitional living program that provides 6 - 24 months of supported living; 24 hour youth workers;	Youth workers available 24/7	Application process and strict guidelines adhered to	http://www.covenanthousebc.org/what/rights_of_passage	604-638-4438 info@covenanthousebc.org 575 Drake Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 4K8
Directions Youth Services	Day Resource Centre	18 & under	Access to housing support workers, life skills support and programming, counselling, needs assessment and service referrals, and assistance in accessing community services such as health and mental health assessment and support, drug and alcohol intervention, shelter services, and Ministry for Children and Family Development services.	M-F 8a-4p		http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/resourcecentre-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services	"Dawn to Dusk," Night Resource Centre & Peer Support	21 & under	Drop-in program for homeless and at-risk youth. Access to laundry facilities, showers, clothing, toiletries, one-to-one peer counselling, health services (including a doctor and street	M-Sun 4p-12a		Same as above	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473

			nurse clinic), and needs assessment and service referrals. 1 hot meal.				
Directions Youth Services	After Hours Crisis Response Program	21 & under	Immediate, open-access services to youth who are at significant risk due to health, mental health and/or drug addiction issues; includes needs assessment and service referrals. This is the only non-residential overnight resource available to youth in Vancouver. Response team works closely with the MCFD after-hours service, police and health emergency services. Supports the safe care program, providing police with a place to take sexually exploited youth in the middle of the night.	M-Sun M-F 12a-8a; 8a-4p Sat-Sun		Same as above	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services	Addictions Counselling	Under 24	Drug and alcohol counselling to homeless and at-risk youth aged 24 and under who are pre or post detox. Addictions counsellors also assist youth with life skills development, and provide group and recreational opportunities	Addictions counselors are available Tu-Sat, hours vary	Pre or post detox.	http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/addictionscounselling-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services & Vancouver School Board	Gateway Alternate Education Program	13-18	Day school program for out-of-school youth. Grades 8 through 12 courses are offered, leading to a dogwood diploma. Students work at their own pace. Gateway offers two sessions daily: a morning and an afternoon session. Students must attend regularly, commit to their scheduled session and work towards attaining academic and personal goals. In addition to the standard curriculum of english, math, social studies, science, phys/ed, and art, the program offers comprehensive lifeskills training in the areas of cooking and nutrition, health and well-being;	8a-4p	Access to the program is through MCFD or VSB referrals only	http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/gatewayalternateschool-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473

			financial and personal planning, sewing, job-readiness, hand tool competency, and much more.				
Directions Youth Services	Housing Support	Primarily 18 and under, though some assistance available for 19 - 24.	Assists with securing safe and affordable housing and works to develop the life skills necessary to maintain housing, as well as any other resource planning required.	9a – 5p or by appointment		http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/housingsupport-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services	Outreach Services	Primarily 18 and under, though some assistance available for 19 - 24.	To identify new youth on the streets of Vancouver and connect them to resources and services. Outreach workers assist in immediately accessing services such as health, mental health, MCFD or police; in returning youth to home or home community, where appropriate; and coordinating a response with other resources and service providers.	M-F variable hours including evenings		http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/outreach-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services	Transition to Independence	18 & under	Assists homeless youth and youth at-risk work toward independence. Connects youth with relevant services and provides coaching and life skills training to help them achieve independence. Includes assistance in finding and maintaining a place to live, attending and succeeding at school, securing employment, and other related independent living skills.	M-F 8a–4p	Access to the program is through MCFD referrals only	www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/transitionstoindependence-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Directions Youth Services	Street Youth Job Action	15 - 24	Community partners hire SYJA youth to perform services like street beautification (street garbage removal, graffiti removal) and needle sweeps. Each morning, youth come to SYJA to find out what jobs are	M-F 8a–4p		http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/streetyouthjobaction-directionsyouthser	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473

			available for the day, and after they have completed their job, they are paid that same day			vicescentre.html	
Directions Youth Services & PLEA Community Services Association	Onyx Voluntary Safe Care	18 & under	Provides resources and case planning	M-F hours vary	Sexually exploited	http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/onyxvoluntarysafecare-directionsyouthservicescentre.html	1134 Burrard Street Vancouver BC V6Z 1Y7 Phone: 604.633.1472 Fax: 604.633.1473
Family Services of Greater Vancouver, funded by MCFD	Walden Safe House	16-18	Seven-day co-ed residential. Access to support services for assistance in finding accommodations, education, and work. Provides referrals for addiction issues, pregnancy, legal problems, medical concerns/care cards, and advocacy with the MCFD issues relating to income assistance. 3 meals/day.	Always open	Hard Drug Free	http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/safehouse.html	Phone: 604.877.1234 Fax: 604.875.0254 Address not public Location Confidential
Unknown	Marc's place	13-15	Shelter		Social Worker or After Hours (MCFD) Referral + parental consent	No direct website, http://www.streetohome.org/sites/default/files/images/Shelters_list_March102011.pdf	Phone: 604-261-7827 After 10pm, call After Hours: 604-660-4927
Family Services of Greater Vancouver	Youth Detox	13-21	Pre-detox assessment, Crisis intervention, Medical screening and assessment at intake, Individualized case plans, Addictions counselling, Life skills enhancement, 24-hour caregiver coverage in a safe and secure residential facility, Stabilization, Escorted outside appointments and meetings, Escorted recreational outings, Withdrawal management medications assessed as needed by addiction doctors, Referrals to needed	Year round 8:30a - 6p	Voluntary referral & continued enrollment. Total abstinence encouraged.	http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/youthdetox.html	Toll-free 1.877.872.4349 or locally 604.872.4349 Location Confidential

			supportive services and/or other professionals, Specialized services for pregnant youth, Introduction to peer support networks including step programs.				
Urban Native Youth Association funded by MCFD	Aboriginal Youth Safehouse	16-18	Three meals a day Your own room Workout room 2 TV rooms Individual Support Lifeskills guidance Arts and crafts		72 hours clean	http://www.unya.bc.ca/programs/live-in-programs/aboriginal-youth-safehouse	1618 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, BC, V5L 1S6 Phone: 604-254-5147 Toll Free: 1-877-223-4321 Fax: 604-254-5159 Email: safehouse@unya.bc.ca
McCeary Centre Society	Adolescent Health Survey	High school-aged	Research into mental health of BC youth, including those affected by poverty			http://www.mcs.bc.ca/ Summary of report on mental health of BC youth in poverty: http://www.mcs.bc.ca/pdf/focus_on_youth_living_in_poverty.pdf	3552 Hastings Street E. Vancouver, BC V5K2A7 Tel: 604-291-1996 Fax: 604-291-7308 mccreary@mcs.bc.ca
Pacific Community Resources delivered at BYRC	Youth Housing Registry & Housing Assistance		Up-to-date database information system on vacancies and assistance to secure and maintain accommodations. City-wide service			BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 East Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca
Pacific Community Resources delivered at BYRC	Youth to Adult Transition Program	Under 19	Caregiver support services.		Referral from social worker	BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 East Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca

Pacific Community Resources delivered at BYRC	Youth Employment Outreach Program		Assists youth with employment needs: resumes, cover letters, workshops & transportation costs for job searches. Assists in obtaining WHMIS, First Aid, traffic control & forklift certification.			BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 East Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca
Pacific Community Resources delivered at BYRC	Supported Housing Program		Provides housing for youth/young adults, including those on Youth agreements with MCFD. Supplies leases in scattered sites throughout city.			BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 E Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca
Pacific Community Resources delivered at BYRC	Demographic-specific programs		Vietnamese youth program: development initiative to work with youth and families through activities and engagement & Aboriginal youth victim support program: provides information, assistance & referrals to victims of sexual or physical violence		Membership in specific demographic group	BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 East Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca
Broadway Youth Resource Centre	Continuum of services & supports	Program-specific	Probation workers, income assistance workers, drug & alcohol workers, adult based education, monthly youth advisory meetings, counselling clinic, aboriginal yout program, health clinic, Leave Out ViolencE (L.O.V.E.) program, youth arts and media gallery & family support worker.		Program-specific	BYRC brochure	#103 - 2780 East Broadway Vancouver, BC V5M 1Y8 604-709-5720 Email: byrc@pcrs.ca Kristine Dredba, Youth Services Supervisor 604-709-5722 & 604-709-4380
Broadway Youth Resource Centre	Resource Room	12-24	The gateway for youth to access the continuum of services. Walk-in. Youth access referral and information services and get access to other programs.		Accessible to everyone, youth and at-risk youth	BYRC brochure + www.pcrs.ca	Kristine Dredba, Youth Services Supervisor 604-709-5722 & 604-709-4380
VSB, MCFD, UNYA & PCRS partnership	Eagle High		Alternate school/day counselling program for 30 students			BYRC brochure	2830 Grandview Highway

Watari	TIP (Transitioning to Independence)	16-24	20 units of supported independent living. Transitional housing program with expected stay of up to 18 months (sometimes longer). Includes: 1. Rental Supplement ($400) to encourage rental of market housing 2. Support services from a housing worker Also provide workshops and services for youth transitioning out of a recovery program.		Youth with addiction for mental health issues. They must be willing set goals and be actively working towards them.	http://www.watari.org/tip_and_tippy.html	
Watari	Youth Day Treatment Program	13-24	7 week voluntary alcohol + drug treatment program. Seeks to facilitate positive change through the development and delivery of innovative services.	Tu-F 12:30p-4p M: Youth connect with peers	At-risk youth	http://www.watari.org/day_program.html	
Watari	Hard Target	19 + under	Community case coordination. - Coordinate strategic planning to assist in exiting the street - Coordinate problem solving team meetings to overcome barriers to intervention - Organizes meetings as required - Coordinates information on child and plans daily with social workers, parents, police and front-line workers		Youth that are street-involved or at risk of becoming street involved	http://www.watari.org/hard_target.html	Coordinator Saskia contact: Cell: 604.379.9341 Tel: 604.254.6995 Fax: 604.254.6985
Watari	Community Youth Outreach	19-24	A worker targets these youth to connect/refer them to various services, such as income assistance, housing, substance abuse programs, food, mental heath services, street nurse programs, courts, hygiene supplies, harm reduction supplies, repatriation and case management. Works in partnership with other organizations.	Until 9pm W-Sat	At risk and street involved youth who are living, working or transitioning through the community who are generally "service cautious."	http://www.watari.org/hard_target.html	Contact Mich Office: 604.254.6995 Cell: 778.829.5040

Additional Resources

Directions Youth Services Centre
http://www.fsgv.ca/programpages/youthservices/directionsyouthservicescentre.html

Vancouver Foundation's Youth Homelessness Initiative
http://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/specialprojects/youthhomelessness.htm

Covenant House-compiled list of Emergency Services
(all available to youth, not all specifically targeted at youth)
http://www.covenanthousebc.org/youth/vancouver_emergency

BC Housing list of Homeless services providers in BC
(not all inclusive)
http://www.bchousing.org/Options/Emergency_Housing/HOP

2007 Youth Housing Options Report
Housing Inventory pg. 24
http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/YouthHousingOptions.pdf

Directory of Homeless Services by Province
http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/YouthHousingOptions.pdf

Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy Shelter Directory, Updated Nov. 15, 2011
http://gvss.ca/PDF-2011/Shelters%20list%20Nov%2015%202011.pdf

ShelterNet BC -- Youth Homessless Shelters
http://www.shelternetbc.ca/shelters/srch_category.php

Watari
http://www.watari.org/about_us.html

Broadway Youth Resource Centre
http://www.homelesshub.ca/(S(ney1kw3gdksy