10 Reasons Why Housing Issues in Canada Put Youth at Risk

Housing issues occur when youth do not have access to stable housing, nor the means to secure housing.[i] It can be visible as in a youth sleeping outdoors (sleeping rough) or staying in shelters. It can be hidden as in a youth couch surfing.

35,000 – 40,000 youth experience housing issues in Canada during the year. On a given night, that may be 6,000 – 7,000 youth sleeping rough or in shelter.[ii]

57.8% of youth experiencing housing issues report current or past involvement with the child welfare system.[iii]

About 20-40% of youth living with housing issues identify as LGBTQ2S.[iv]

Nearly 80% of youth experiencing housing issues reported leaving home because of family conflict. 63% reported childhood trauma and abuse.[v]

83% of youth facing housing issues reported bullying in school, which is four times more than Canadian youth in general.[vi]

63% of youth experiencing housing issues were victimized (e.g. sexual assault, theft) on more than one occasion.[vii]

Young women facing housing issues are among the most vulnerable to sex trafficking.[viii]

Housing issues for youth are associated with challenges in academic success, mental health difficulties, worsening physical health, substance use, street crime, and precarious employment.[ix]

Government, service providers, and communities must work together to keep youth safe.

Join us in ending violence.

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

[ii] Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/WithoutAHome-final.pdf

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[iv] Abramovich, A., & Shelton, J. (Eds.). (2017). Where Am I Going to Go? Intersectional Approaches to Ending LGBTQ2S Youth Homelessness in Canada & the U.S. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/Where_Am_I_Going_To_Go.pdf

[v] Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/WithoutAHome-final.pdf

[vi] Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/WithoutAHome-final.pdf

[vii] Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/WithoutAHome-final.pdf

[viii] Canadian Women's Foundation. (2014). "No More" Ending Sex-Trafficking in Canada Report. Available online: http://canadianwomen.org/sites/canadianwomen.org/files/NO%20MORE.%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf

[ix] Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Available online: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/WithoutAHome-final.pdf