

# Media Release

For Immediate Release:

## Families experiencing homelessness in Greater Victoria in a cycle of impossibility



COMMUNITY SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
research·insights·solutions



VICTORIA, BC, October 16, 2014 – The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness has released a study of family homelessness in Greater Victoria. The study indicates that lost or inadequate income and/or unaffordable housing are the primary drivers of family homelessness. Furthermore the circumstances that create this situation are often out of a family’s control. The report also identified that once a family is experiencing homelessness, the complexity of the system makes it hard for families to access the resources they need to become housed again.

“Families experiencing homelessness are in what seems like a never ending cycle,” says Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director at the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness. “They find themselves in this situation for reasons largely out of their control. Only to find the lack of affordable housing in the region prevents them from exiting homelessness.”

“This report presents the stark reality of how income levels affect a family’s ability to secure housing,” says Marika Albert, lead researcher for the report. “A family of 4 with two income earners working fulltime for minimum wage is spending a large portion of their household income on their housing when the average rent for a three-bedroom apartment is \$1281/month. Families receiving income assistance or disability benefits are even worse off, with only \$700.00 a month to go towards shelter costs. How can they secure housing in this rental housing market and still cover the basic costs of raising a family like providing nutritious food?”

The report identifies potential solutions including:

- Increasing the housing supply and housing subsidies so fewer families are at risk.
- Increasing access to emergency funding like the Homelessness Prevention Fund to prevent families in financial crisis from falling into homelessness.
- Greater emergency supports for families experiencing homelessness including family only drop in centres and emergency housing.

Read the full report: [The Cycle of Impossibility](#)

Organizations contributing to the report:

The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness is a partnership of local service providers, non-profit organizations, all levels of government, and the business, post-secondary and faith communities. The Coalition’s vision is to end homelessness in the Capital Region by 2018.

The Community Social Planning Council (CPSC) is the leading independent, non-partisan, and knowledgeable voice on socio-economic issues in BC’s Capital region; it fosters social

innovation and integrated action aimed at social, economic and environmental conditions and to help create sustainable communities.

The Centre for Addictions Research of BC (CARBC) is a network of individuals and groups dedicated to the study of substance use and addiction in support of community-wide efforts to promote health and reduce harm. Our research is used to inform a broad range of projects, reports, publications and initiatives aimed at providing all people in BC and beyond with access to happier, healthier lives, whether using substances or not.

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