

# Media Release



For Immediate Release:

## Coalition study provides pathways out of youth homelessness

VICTORIA, BC, March 31, 2015 – The Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness has released a study of youth homelessness in Greater Victoria. This study engaged directly with youth experiencing homelessness and indicates there are a variety of ways that youth become homeless. These include family issues, lack of affordable housing, lack of life skills, and poor transition to adulthood services.

“The identified pathways into homelessness for youth are not really new to us,” says Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director at the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness. “What’s different are the solutions presented to end youth homelessness, particularly those identified by the youth themselves. These are solutions we are going to actively pursue with our partners.”

“This project really raised the importance of recognizing that youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability have unique, and specific needs for supports,” says Marika Albert, lead researcher for the report, “Youth are at different physical and emotional stages than adults, for instance. These different developmental stages mean that youth require supports that reflect those unique needs. Youth who experience homelessness at 15 will have different needs than youth experiencing homelessness at 19, and youth experiencing homelessness at 19 have different needs than adults in their 30s. This doesn’t mean we have to prioritize certain needs over others, but it does mean we need to have a range of services and supports that meet the needs of youth where they are at.”

### Pathways Out of Youth Homelessness: (Condensed list)

- **Work local funders to recreate mobile supports** (similar to the Y-Van, a mobile outreach unit that was cancelled in 2011) in order to outreach to the most marginalized and vulnerable youth.
- **Increase youth access to necessary supports and services** through a mobile friendly web application, and through leadership programs in schools.
- **Ensure youth emergency shelter and crisis services are place-based:** Increase the number of housing outreach workers, and youth emergency shelters beds across the region so youth do not have to leave their home communities to access crisis supports.  
**Build an emergency youth shelter in the West Shore**
- **Secure on-going funding for a youth housing workers to sustain long-term relationships:** Work with local and provincial funders to provide long-term funding to ensure youth housing outreach workers continue to work with youth until they are fully adapted to living independently.

- **Assist youth in building financial stability:** Work with local funders and financial institutions to develop youth income supports such as matched savings programs to build up their financial stability.
- **Develop a regional youth employment development system:** Work with local employers, and employment support programs, to support vulnerable youth and youth with barriers to employment in accessing training and employment opportunities, and maintaining employment once secured.
- **Ministry Related Priorities**
  - **Work with the provincial government and service providers to ensure youth are not discharged into homelessness**
  - **Increase low-barrier housing options:** Work with MCFD and local service providers to create more low-barrier, youth- orientated transitional housing across the region so that youth do not have to leave their home communities to access supports.

Read the report: [Youth Pathways](#)

**pathways in & out of youth homelessness in greater victoria**

**IN**

- Family conflict and the breakdown of the child-parent relationship.
- Lack of employment and training opportunities while in and out of school.
- Lack of affordable housing options that are youth-friendly and low-barrier.
- Youth 19-24 are under-served and need appropriate, age-specific supports and services.
- Few services and supports that provide holistic care for youth transitioning out of the child welfare system.
- Not enough income and related supports to stay in school when living independently.

**YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

**OUT**

- Work with local funders to recreate mobile supports in order to reach the most marginalized and vulnerable youth.
- Increase youth access to necessary supports and services through a mobile friendly web application and through leadership programs in schools.
- Ensure youth emergency shelter and crisis services are place-based. Increase housing outreach workers and youth emergency shelter beds across the region so youth don't have to leave their home communities. Build an emergency youth shelter in the West Shore.
- Secure on-going funding for a youth housing workers to sustain long-term relationships and continue to work with youth until they are fully adapted to living independently.
- Assist youth in building financial stability: Work with local funders and financial institutions to develop youth income supports.
- Develop regional youth employment development system. Work with local employers and employment support programs, to support youth accessing training and employment opportunities.

**MINISTRY RELATED PRIORITIES**

1. Work with the provincial government and service providers to ensure youth are not discharged into homelessness.
2. Increase low-barrier housing options. Work with MCFD and local service providers to create more low-barrier, youth- orientated transitional housing across the region so youth do not have to leave their home communities to access supports.

From Youth Pathways: In and Out of Homelessness in the Capital Region. For more information: [www.victoriahomelessness.ca](http://www.victoriahomelessness.ca)

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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.

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