

Media Release

For Immediate Release:



greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness

hope has found a home

Coalition Surveys Greater Victoria on Attitude towards Homelessness

VICTORIA, BC, April 14, 2014 – Today the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (Coalition) released data from a recent survey on the attitudes on homelessness in Greater Victoria.

Homelessness is Greater Victoria according to Greater Victorians Survey Results:

- 90% agree that affordable housing would help reduce homelessness (compared to 85% in last year's survey)
- 85% of respondents agreed that ensuring access to affordable housing is the responsibility of the government (compared to 84% last year)
- 70% of respondents found the statement, "it costs more in government services...for a person to be homeless than it does to provide them with housing" to be credible (compared to 63% last year)
- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (73%) have a relative or friend who has experienced mental health and/or addiction issues. Some respondents (41.6%) know someone who has been homeless with an additional 4% of respondents indicating that they have experienced homelessness themselves.
- Most respondents cited mental health issues (98%), poverty (94%) and drug and/or alcohol abuse (93%) as the main reasons for homelessness. Other common responses included; physical, cognitive, or other disability (83%); and/or unemployment (83%).
- When asked if homelessness is an issue in their municipality, the following percentage responded "no":
 - Sidney 53.8%
 - Western Communities (Colwood, Langford, Highlands, Metchosin, Sooke, & View Royal) 50%
 - Saanich (incl. Central and North) 36%
 - Oak Bay 34.8%
 - Victoria 33%
 - Esquimalt 31.6%
- Participant demographics by region:
 - Saanich (incl. Central and North) 40.6%
 - Victoria 24%
 - Western Communities (Colwood, Langford, Highlands, Metchosin, Sooke, & View Royal) 21.8%
 - Oak Bay 5.7%
 - Esquimalt 4.7%
 - Sidney 3.2%

“The real surprise to me is the number of residents who don’t believe homelessness is an issue in their community,” said Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director of the Coalition. “There are people experiencing homelessness or at-risk of homelessness across the region – it is not just a downtown issue. We obviously have some work to do in getting that message out.”

“We are excited to see a growing awareness within our community of the issues surrounding homelessness,” said Mayor Dean Fortin, Co-Chair of the Leadership Council at the Coalition. “People are recognizing that it costs more in government services for a person to be homeless than it does to provide housing.”

View the [Homelessness in Greater Victoria according to Greater Victorians](#) infographic online.

Survey completed by R.A Malatest & Associates Ltd, margin of error is 4.9%.

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 Greater Victoria by 2018.

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