



**CAEH** Training &  
Technical Assistance

HF4Y & **LGBTQ2S+**

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**Victoria, Feb 4 & 5, 2019**

1. Experiences of LGBTTGNCQ+ Youth in York Region: for more info ([jo.gomes@seneca.on.ca](mailto:jo.gomes@seneca.on.ca))
2. family acceptance project [familyproject.sfsu.edu](http://familyproject.sfsu.edu)
3. Intersectional Approaches to Ending LGBTQ2S Homelessness in Canada & the U.S., Abramovich & Shelton Eds, Chapter 4.1: open access on [homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca))
4. Youth Wisdom, Harm Reduction & Housing First: Raincity Housing's Queer & Trans Youth Housing Project, Chapter 5.1 in Intersectional Approaches to Ending LGBTQ2S Homelessness in Canada & the U.S., Abramovich & Shelton Eds.)



# What IS HF4Y?





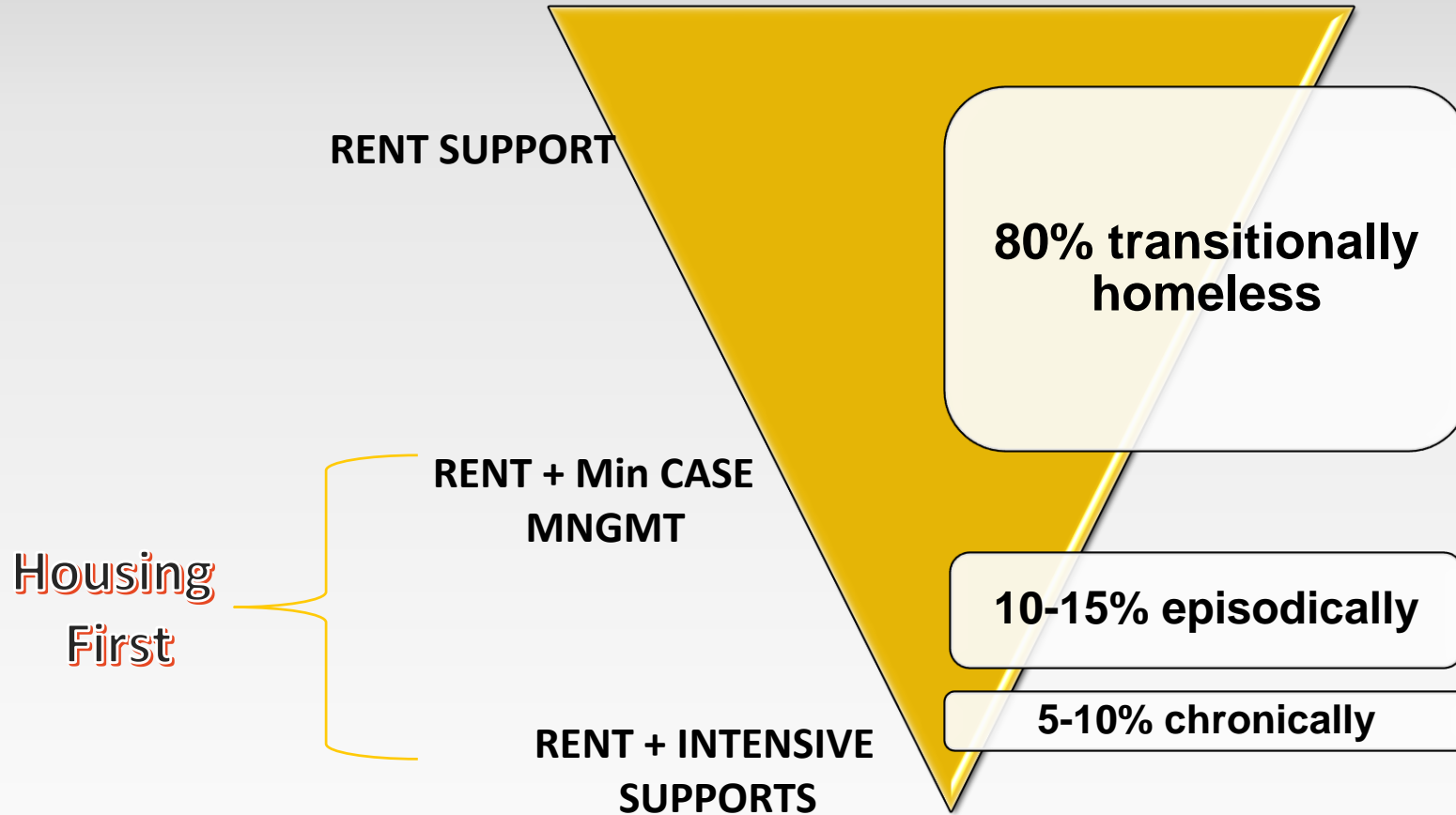
# Necessary Service Values & Beliefs

<b>All people, regardless of their past or current situation have a right to basic needs including food, clothing, being cared about, and shelter. It is not a privilege.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>All people, regardless of their past or current situation or behaviors, can make productive change in their lives.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Change is inevitable – all individuals have the urge to succeed, to explore the world around them and to make themselves useful to others and their communities.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>My personal values should remain neutral or separate from a participant’s choices and behaviors.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>An absolute belief that every person has potential and it is their unique strengths and capabilities that will determine their evolving story as well as define who they are - not their limitations.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Person’s perspective of reality is primary (their story)– therefore, need to value and start the change process with what is important to the person - not the expert.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Youth seeking supports should not have to be held to preconditions of treatment, sobriety, or even housing to receive them.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Access to supports and services should not be on a first come first served basis but based on priority for those determined to be the most vulnerable and in need.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>People are more capable than their circumstances suggest. Functionality is not capability.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>





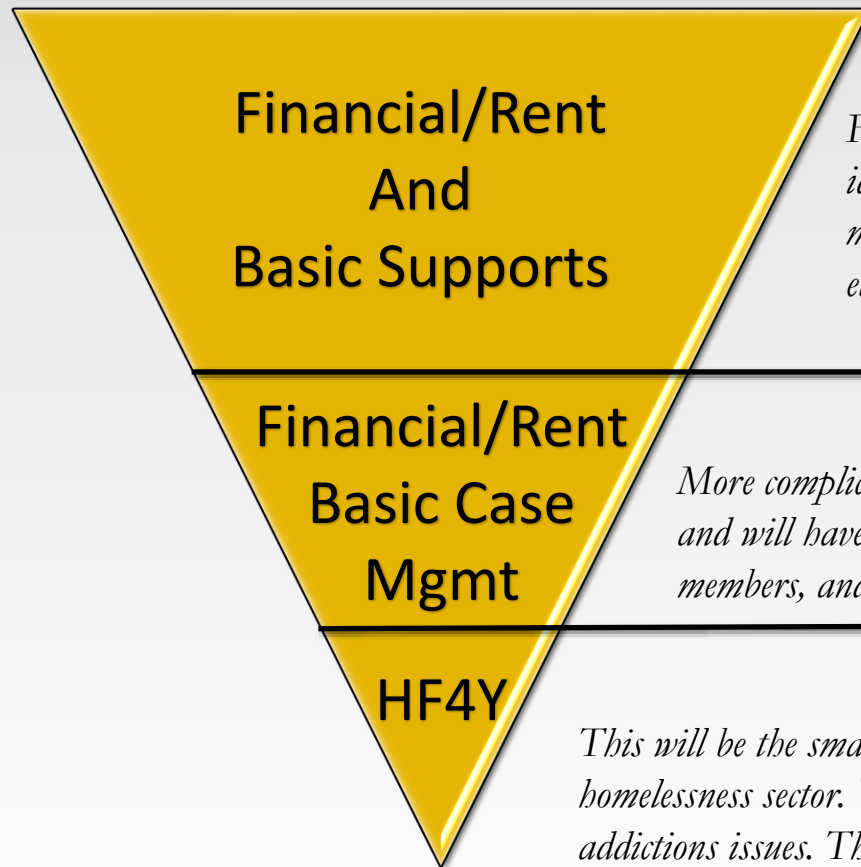
# WHO IS HOMELESS? HOW LONG ARE THEY HOMELESS? HOW ARE THEY SERVED?



**Families and youth have similar patterns**

# Homeless Youth: *Coming of Age* Report

The National Alliance to End Homelessness typology draws from considerable research on frequency and duration of homelessness (see Kuhn & Culhane, 1998), and more recently, a review of typologies of youth homelessness put forward by Toro et al., 2011.



## Temporarily Disconnected

*For the vast majority of young people who become homeless, it is a short-term experience. Toro et al., (2011) identify this population as generally younger, and having more stable or redeemable relations with family members, and are more likely to remain in school. For this population, there is a strong need for prevention and early intervention to divert young people from the homelessness system.*

## Unstably Connected

*More complicated housing history, likely longer, repeated episodes of homelessness. More likely to be disengaged from school, and will have challenges obtaining and maintaining employment. Most will have retained some level of connection with family members, and are less likely to experience serious mental health or addictions issues compared to chronically homeless youth.*

## Chronically Disconnected

*This will be the smallest group of homeless youth, but have the most complex needs, users of the most resources in the youth homelessness sector. Will experience long term homelessness, repeated episodes, and will more likely have mental health and/or addictions issues. The most unstable relations with their families, and in some cases no connections at all (Gaetz, forthcoming).*



# Strengthen Family Support for Queer Youth

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The majority of queer youth who leave home do so because their family rejects them. Homeless prevention or reunification involves work with family to 1. Understand the impact of their behavior and 2. be less rejecting and move towards acceptance. Even small improvements can make a BIG difference.

Highly Rejected queer youth are:

- 8x more likely to have attempted suicide
- 6x more likely to report high levels of depression
- 3x more likely to use illegal drugs
- 3x more likely to be at risk for HIV and STD

Discussion: what behaviors are rejecting and what behaviors are accepting?

# Even Small Changes can make a Difference

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## REJECTING

Excluding from family activities

Blaming child when they are discriminated against

Pressuring your child to be more (or less) masculine or feminine

Making your child keep their identity a secret

Telling your child that you are ashamed of them

## ACCEPTING

Require that other family members respect your child

Support your child's identity even if it feels uncomfortable

Advocate for them when they are mistreated

Welcome your child's queer friends

Express affection when you find out your child's identity

# Root Causes of Homelessness

Public Perception

Addiction

Delinquency

Mental Illness

Poor Choices/Attitude

Reality

Intergenerational Trauma  
Abuse/Trauma (60% to 70%)

Discrimination/Racism

Employment  
Child Protection

**Lack of Supports**

**Homophobia**

Education/Disability

Poverty



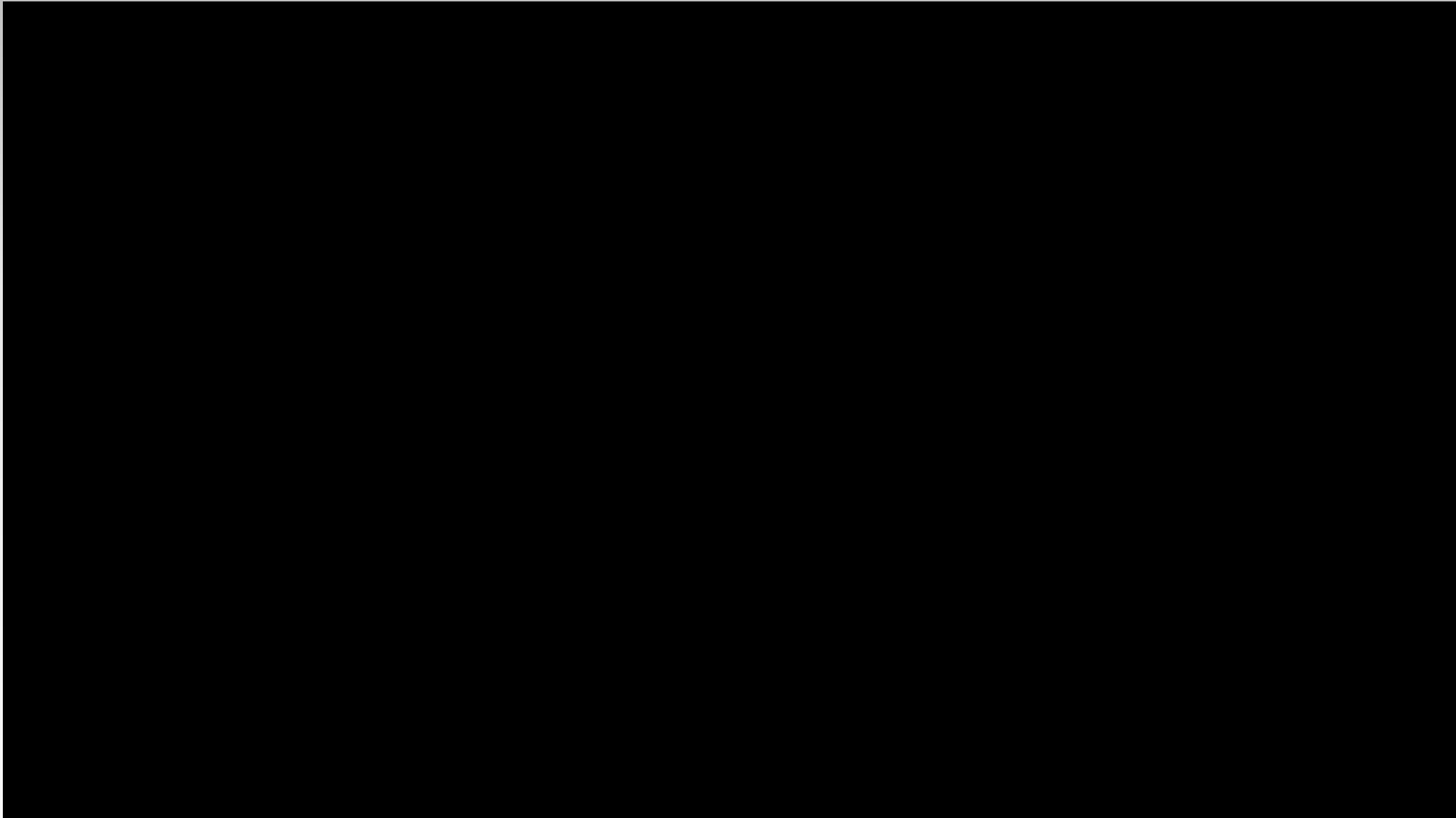
# Impact of Trans/Homophobia

- Queer youth are over represented in homeless populations (as are indigenous and black youth)
- Most queer youth who are homeless can attribute their gender or sexual expression/identity as contributing to their homelessness- heteronormative societal values influence personal beliefs and attitudes (impacts system safety and family acceptance for queer youth)
- Internalized homophobia (self hate/shame) and the pain associated with that can lead to maladaptive behaviors the same as ACEs.

# Write a Letter

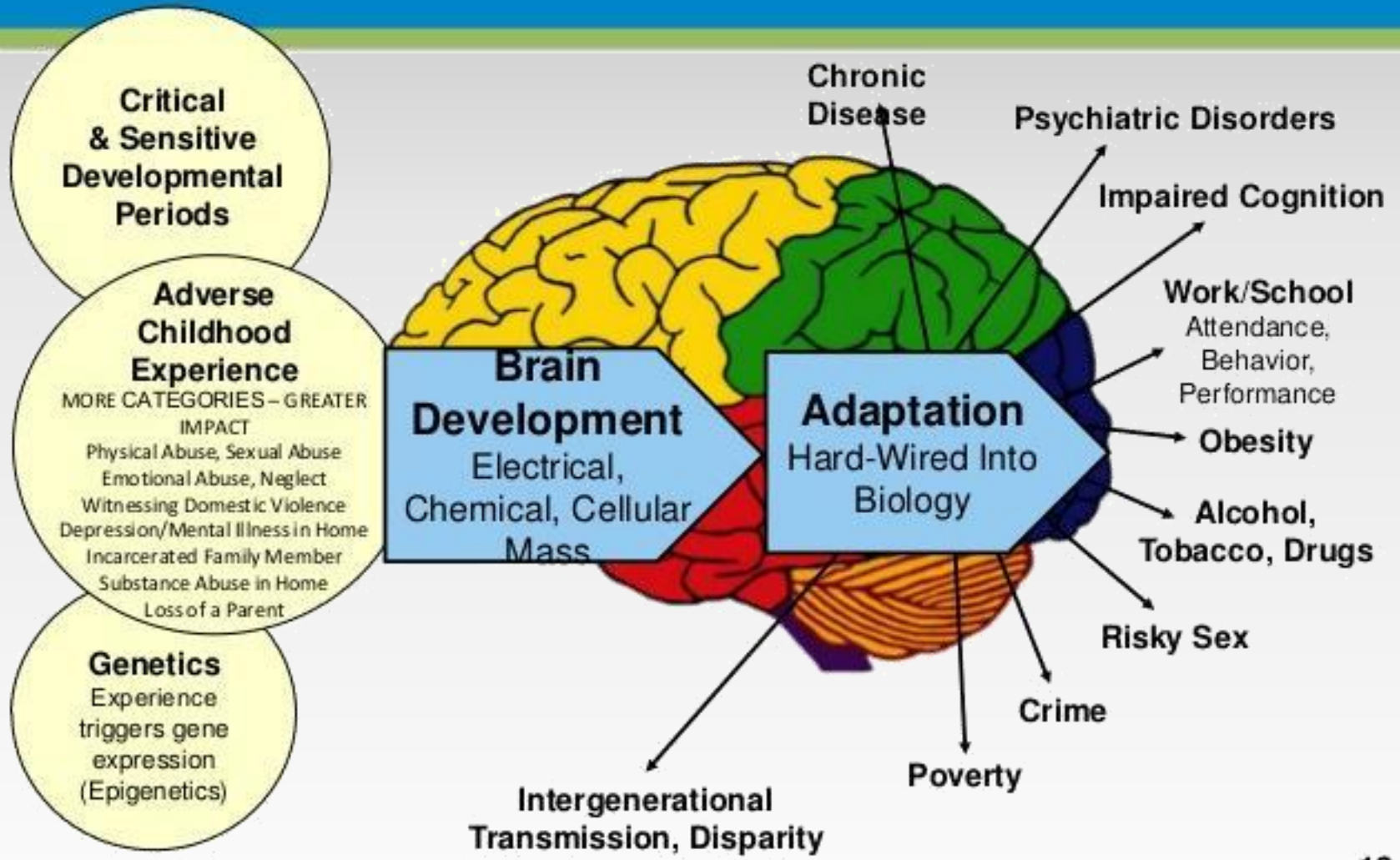
- Quietly and individually write a letter to your parents or other family of origin
- Tell them you are marrying a person of the same sex
- 5 mins







# Lifespan Impacts of ACEs

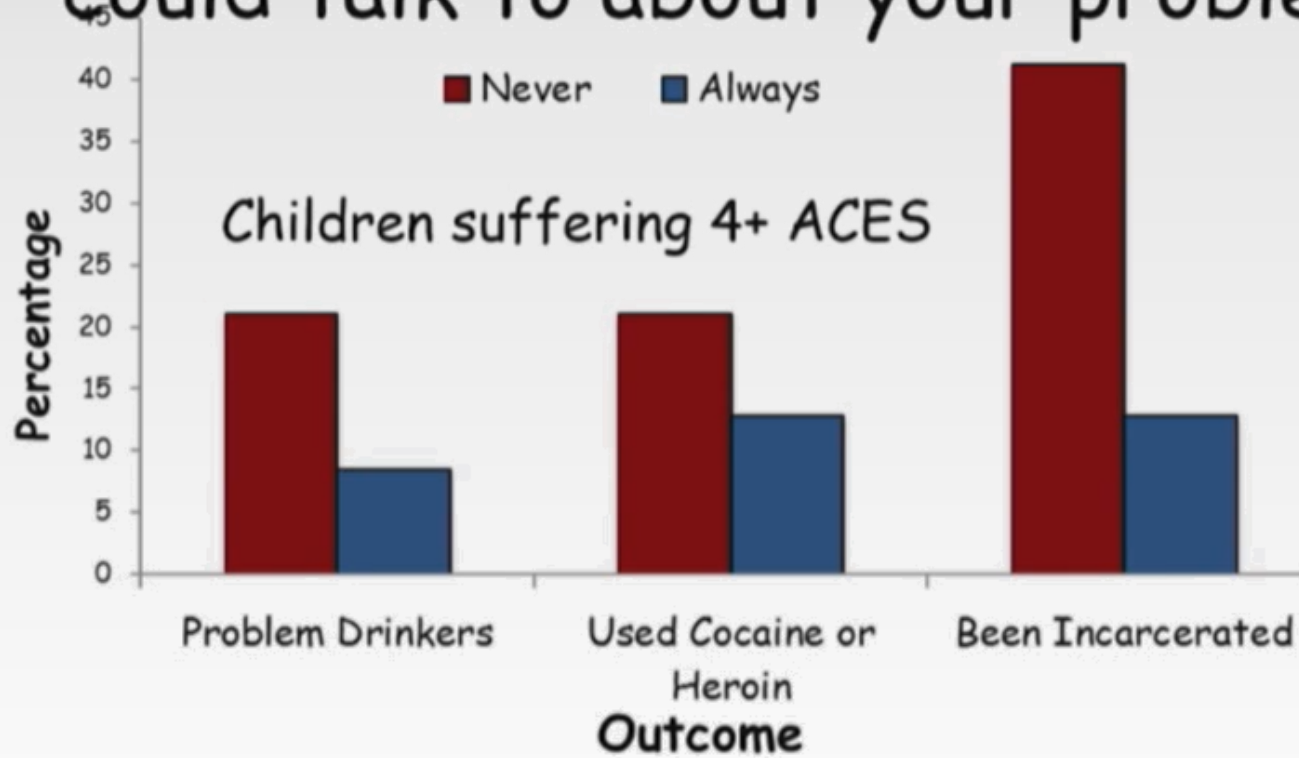


Lack of Care = 13x  
 Physical Abuse = 16x  
 Sexual Abuse = 1.7x  
 More than One = 26x

Source: Family Policy Council, 2012

# Building Resilience - Helping people cope with ACEs

As a child, there was adult you trusted and could talk to about your problems?



BREAK TIME





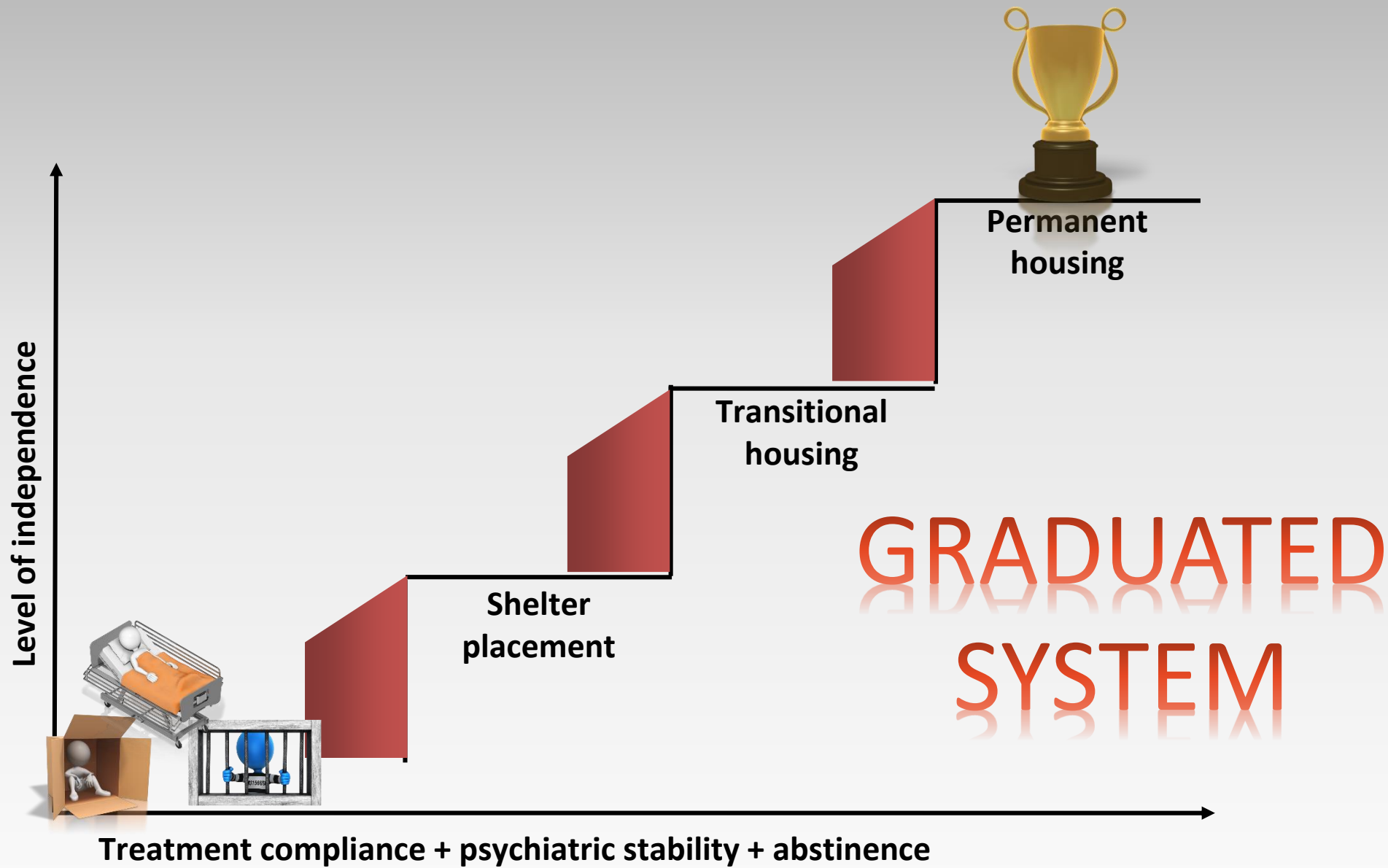
## Cornerstone of HF4Y

**“Causes and conditions of youth homelessness are distinct;  
Therefore solutions must also be distinct”**



## Distinctions of HF4Y Perspective

- Developing adolescents and young adults
  - Variations on housing options
  - Ability to handle different life situations vary
  - Nutritional Needs
- Normal expectations for youth
  - Ability, skills, appropriateness
  - “Normal” behavior issues related to development
- Homeless youth do not face all the same challenges
  - Chronic health issues
  - Chronically homeless
  - High community cost
  - Law differences due to age
    - Child Protection factors / guardianship
  - No experience with independent living
  - Higher rates of suicidal thoughts/attempts
- Recovery has differences. Focus on strengths
- Prevention Lens





**Recovery or Exiting Homelessness is NOT a Linear Process**

# Institutional Circuit

When youth  
can't or won't  
comply with  
treatment as  
usual







View of person served

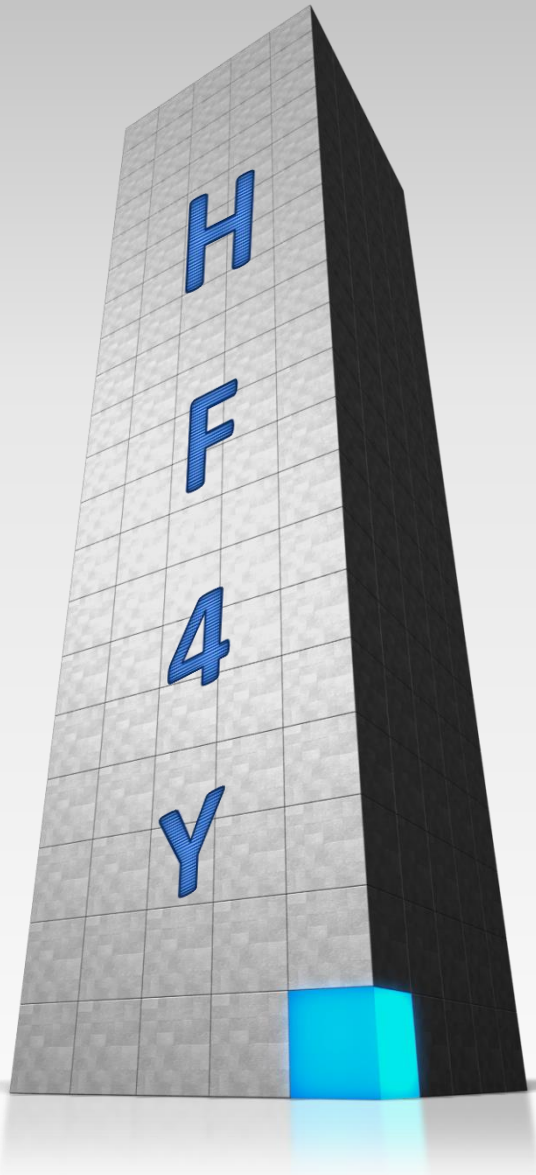
Power in decision making

How services are provided

How housing is provided

# Paradigm Shift In Providers Point of View



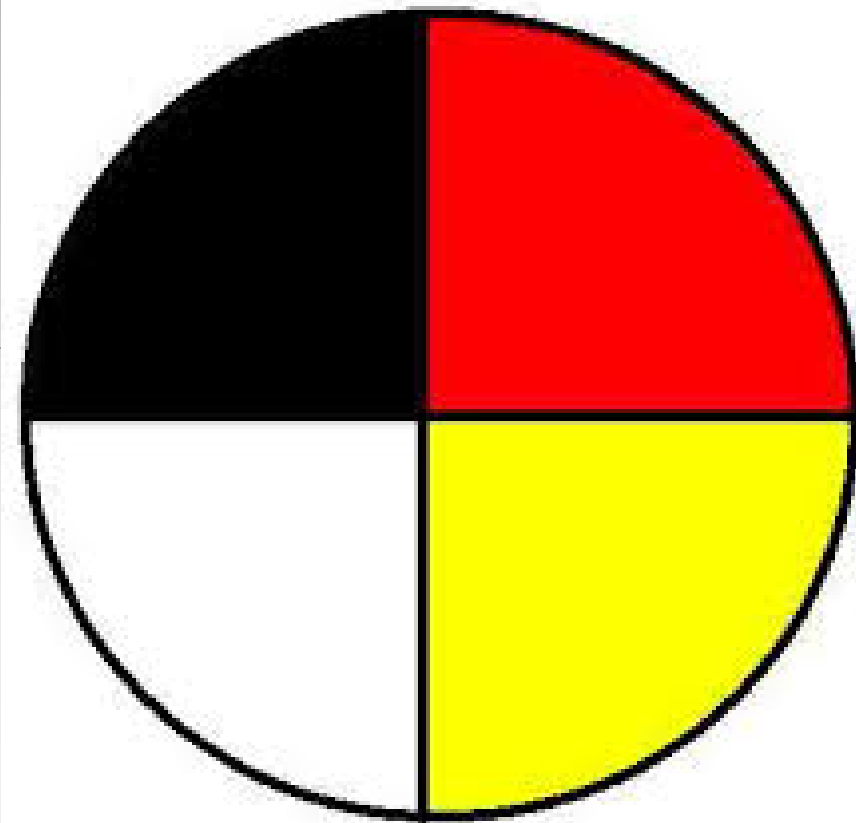


Housing First for Youth (HF4Y) is a rights-based intervention for young people (aged 13-24) who experience homelessness, or who are at risk. It is designed to address the needs of developing adolescents and young adults by providing them with immediate access to housing that is safe, affordable and appropriate, and the necessary and age-appropriate supports that focus on health, healing, well-being, life skills, Family and Natural Supports, cultural connection, engagement in education and employment, and social inclusion.

# Indigenous Definition of Homeless

- Regular Definition of homelessness:

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- Lacking a house or structure of habitation
- Indigenous Definition of Homelessness (Homeless Hub)
- Includes 12 dimensions that explain the experience of indigenous homelessness as *disconnection* from All My Relations (ex. Cultural Disintegration and Loss homelessness)



**Are all youth appropriate  
for a HF4Y program or  
Intervention?**

**Why? Or Why Not?**

LUNCH TIME





**Philosophy**



**Program/Intervention**

## Housing First: Two Components

*Core principles are important because they provide a guide for planning and delivering a strategy, service or intervention. Core principles also help to measure fidelity to the HF4Y model, especially for scaling or adaptation.*

# Housing First Core Principles

**Choice:** Housing & Services

**Separation:** Housing & Services  
Continuity of Support

**Service Array:** Community  
Integration

**Recovery Orientation:** Program  
Philosophy

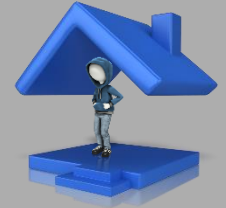
**Program Structure:** Approach  
Practice



# HF4Y Core Principles (*The Dough*)

Principle 1

A Right to Housing with No Preconditions



Principle 2

Youth Choice, Voice, and Self-Determination



Principle 3

**Positive Youth Development and Wellness Orientation – Healing, Connections to Culture, Identity**



Principle 4

Individualized, Youth-Driven Supports with No Time Limits or Preconditions

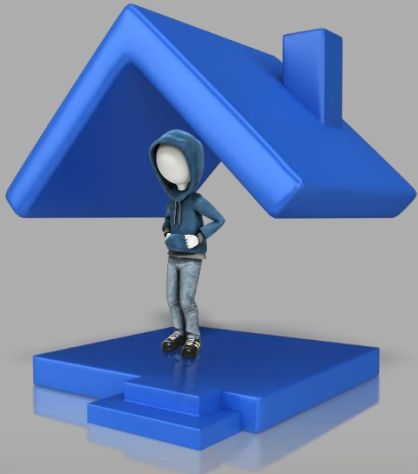


Principle 5

Social Inclusion and Community Integration



# HF4Y Core Principle #1: **Right to Housing with No Preconditions**



**HF4Y involves providing young people with assistance in obtaining safe, secure and permanent housing that meets their needs as quickly as possible.**

# Rain City Housing's Housing First for Queer Youth



Choice of communal living or individual apartments

Radical Harm Reduction

Culturally Appropriate Support

Community Dinners and saying “I love you”





**A right to housing with no preconditions means that housing and supports are separated. In other words, access to housing cannot be defined by conditions such as participation in programming that may mean non-compliance with leads to loss of, or a denial of access to housing.**

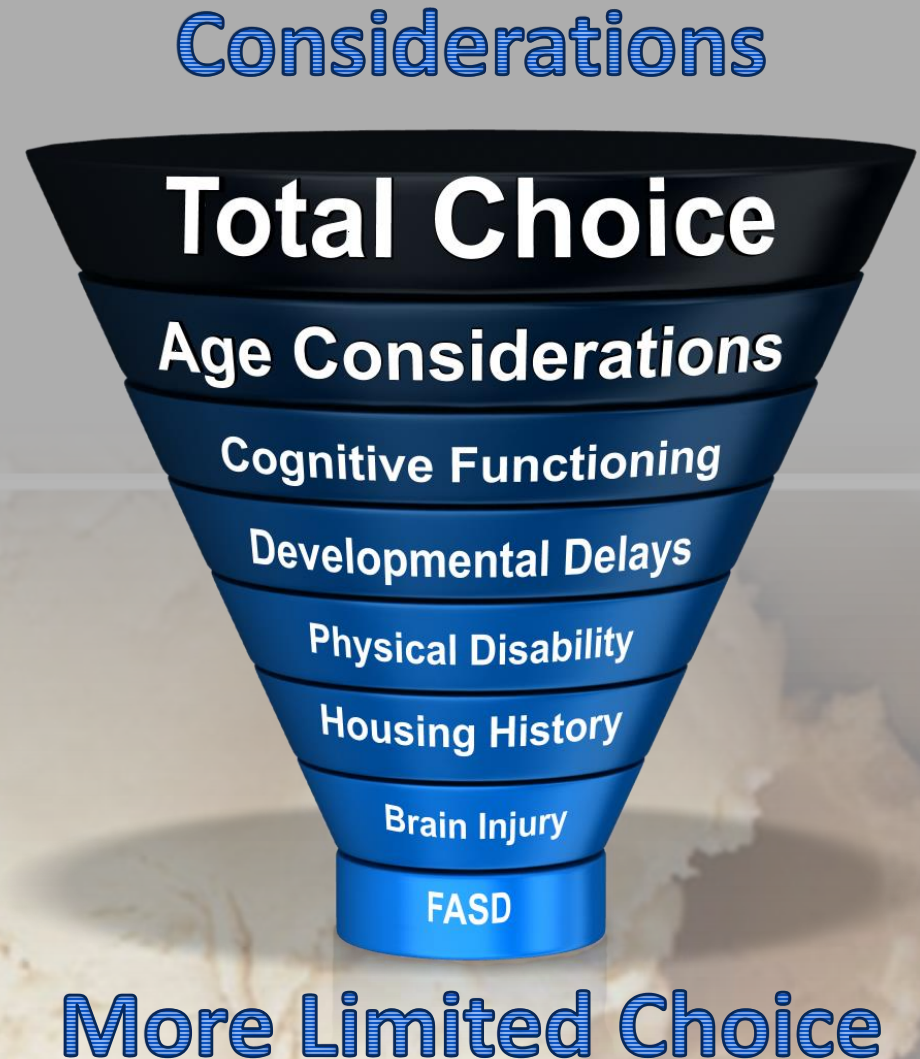
How are you going to ensure the youth  
You work with have a

Right to housing with no preconditions?

# HF4Y Core Principle #2: Youth Choice, Voice, and Self-Determination

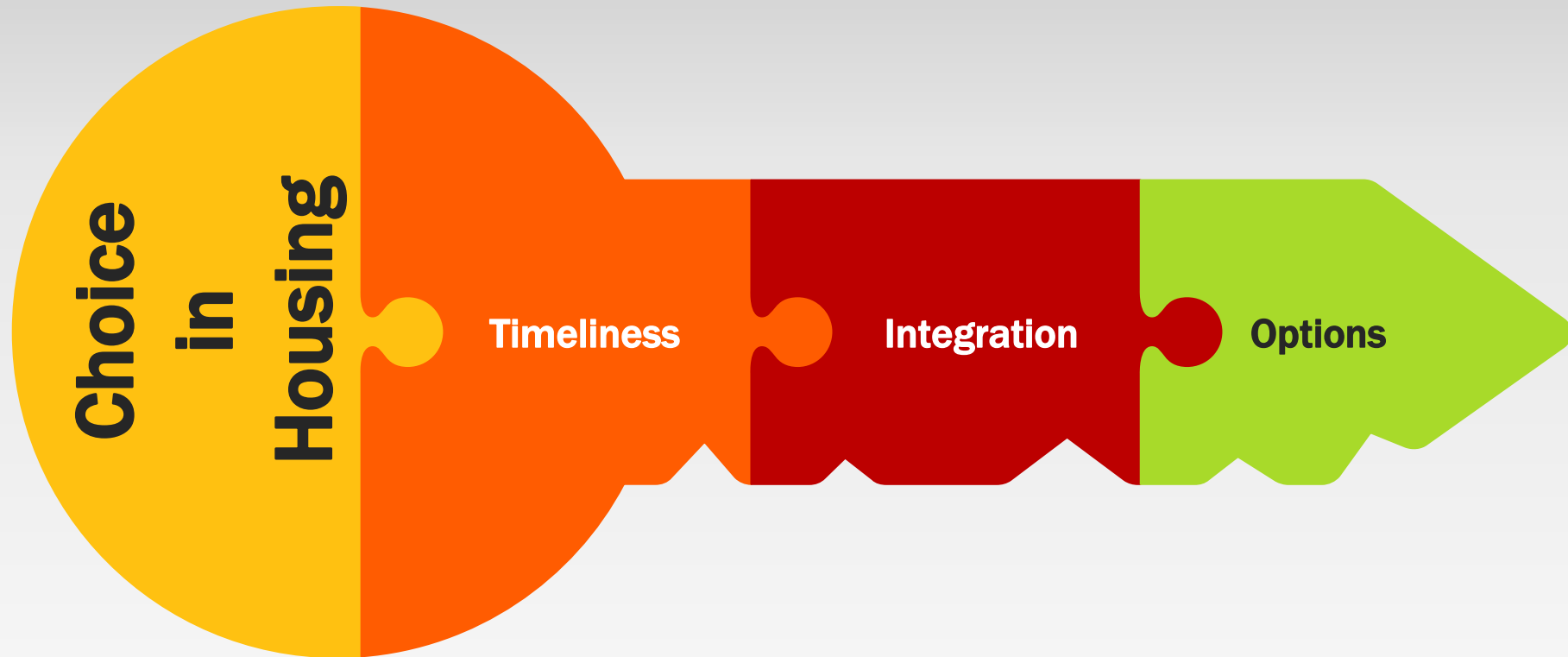


As a rights-based, client-centred approach, HF4Y emphasizes youth choice regarding housing and supports. Choices are best made when young people have been provided with enough information to make an informed decision on the appropriate options available to them.





# Key Factors

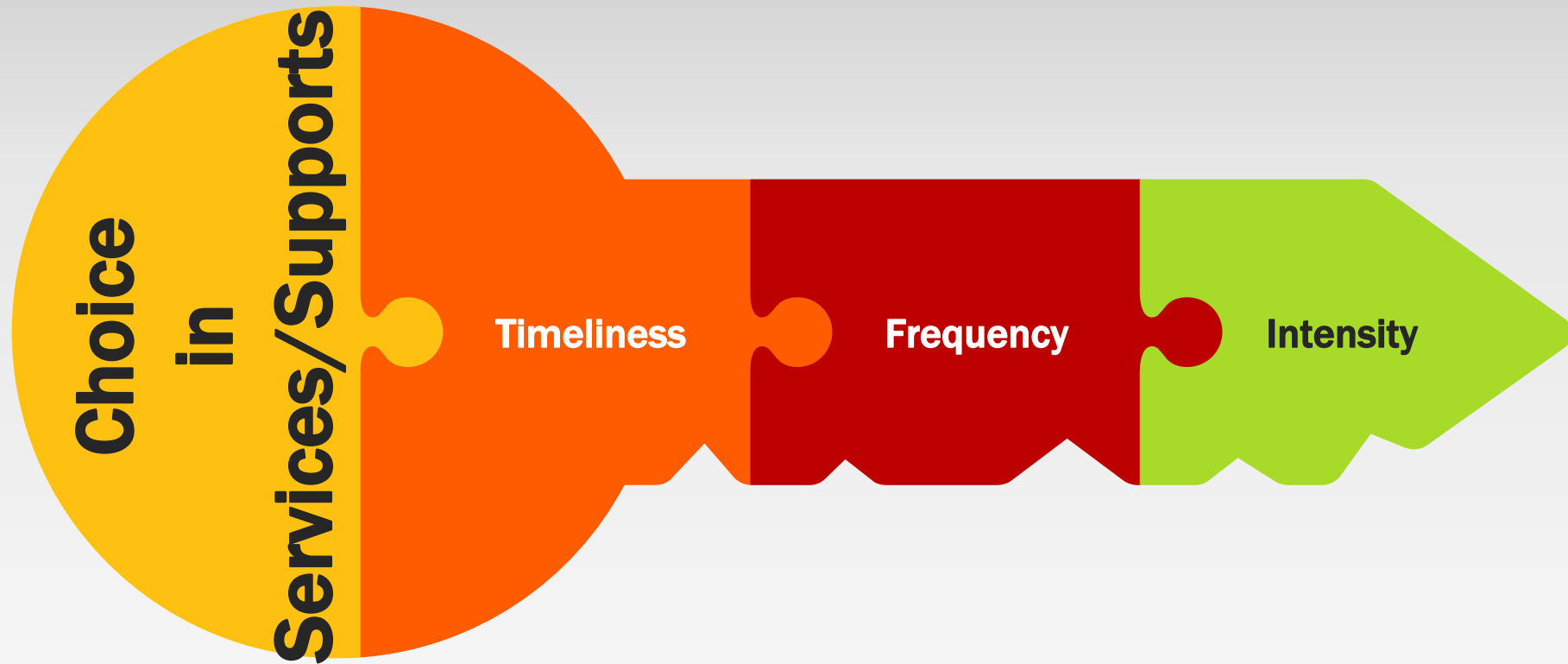


# Options Should be Plentiful and Flexible





# Key Factors



# What's Not A Choice?



**1.Home Visit/Weekly  
Contact Purposeful**

**2.Paying rent 30%**

**3.Adhering to standard  
lease**

**What do you do...**

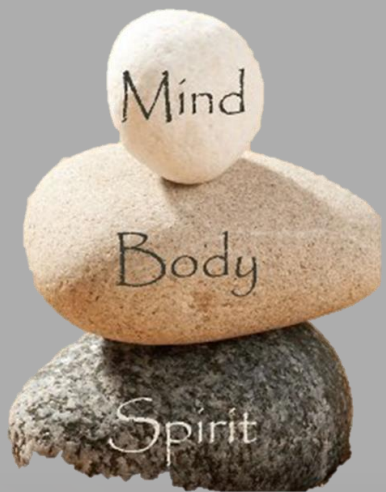
**What can you do...**

**What will you do...**

**If a youth is not engaging or  
connecting weekly?**

BREAK TIME

# HF4Y Core Principle #3: Positive Youth Development and Wellness Orientation



## Recovery

### Intergenerational Trauma



Physical Abuse

Emotional Abuse

Sexual Abuse

Interpersonal Violence

Assault

Neglect

Exposure to Domestic Violence

Street Violence

Sexual Exploitation

# ACE & Homelessness Findings

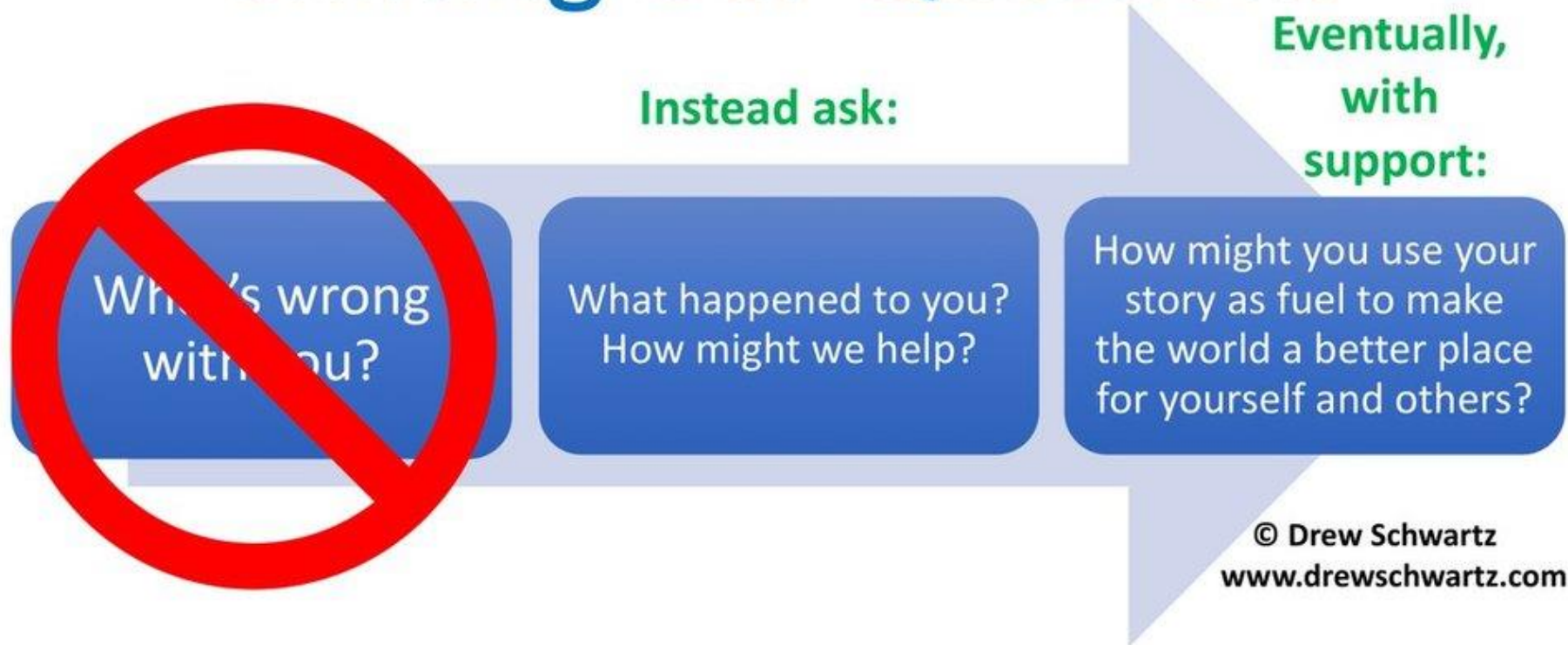
- More than 85% of respondents reported at least one of the 10 adverse childhood experiences and more than half (52.4%) experienced more than 4 ACEs
- More than half (55.1%), suffered the loss of a biological parent, followed by a lack of family support growing up (51.9%) and living in a home with a substance abuser (50.3%)
- More than half of respondents (51.4%) report having experienced verbal abuse and 22.2% report they did not receive the proper care growing up. More than a third (40.5%) of homeless respondents suffered physical abuse by a parental figure. Over a quarter of respondents (29.7%) had a sexual abuse background



# Trauma Informed

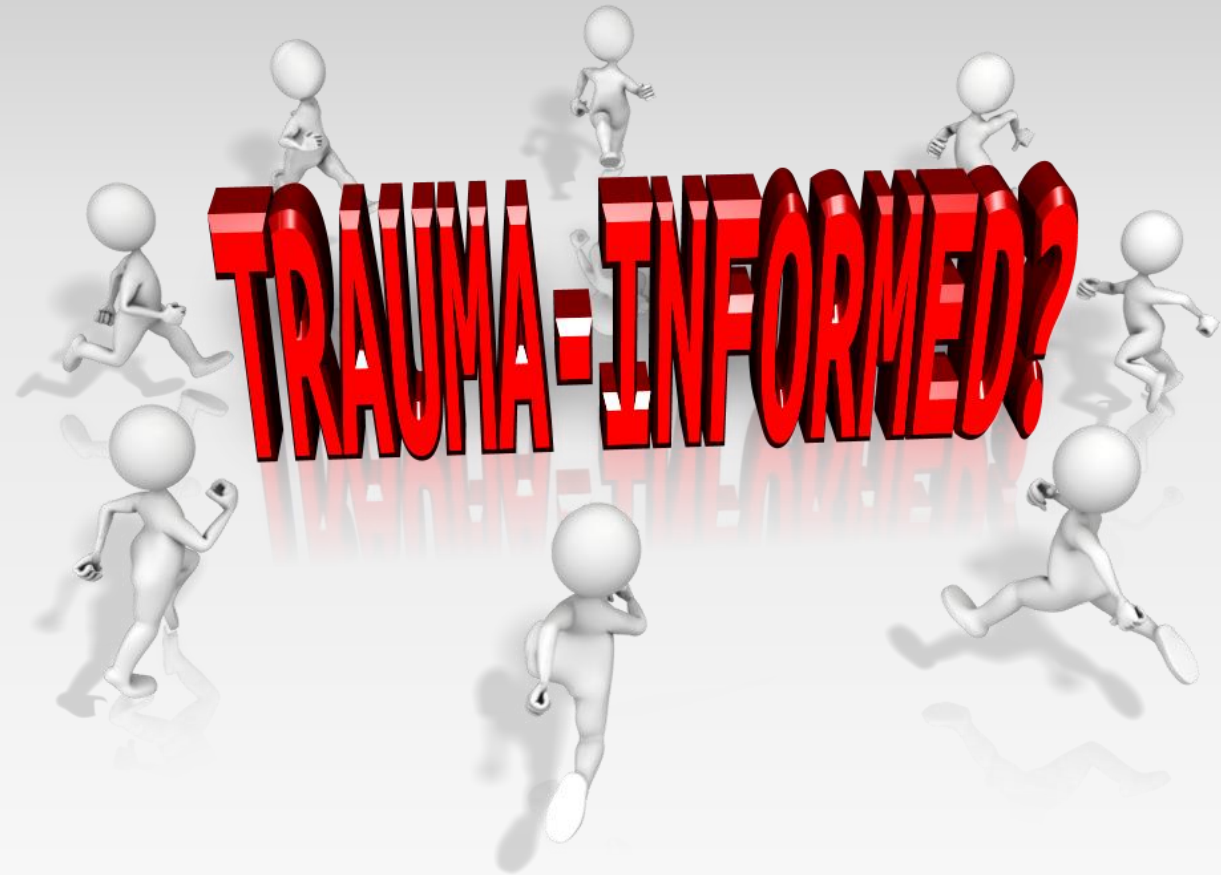


# Trauma-Informed Lens: Shifting Our Questions



# Program Considerations

- **Principles, Policies, and Procedures**
- **Increase consumer safety**
- **Prevent Re-Traumatization in context of service access**
- **Formal staff training**
- **Involvement of participants in decision making regarding treatment**
- **Often priority goal area**



# “Positive Youth Development”



Strength-Based

Risk  
&  
Vulnerability + ASSETS

Confidence, Health, Resilience

Supports that help youth to nurture and maintain physical, emotional, social, recreational, educational, occupational, and vocational activities.



**IDENTIFIES**



Youth's strengths in order to build self-esteem and + sense of self

**WORKS**



To improve the youth's communication and problem-solving skills

**ENHANCES**



Natural supports, including family relationships

**ASSISTS**



The youth in personal goal setting

**HELPS**



Access educational opportunities and personal interests

# Building Resilience for Queer Youth: AGENCY

- Leave space to name and identify your own identities
- All gender washrooms
- Signage at welcome
- Equal partner in treatment planning
- Teach self advocacy skills, activism and social justice and related boundaries





# Building Resilience for Queer Youth: PRIDE

- Teach about systemic homophobia/transphobia
- Teach about cisnormative and heteronormative societal values
- Understand and unpack internalized homophobia and how that influences beliefs about self
- Foster critical insight
- Teach positive history
- Host a queer youth Pride event



# Building Resilience for Queer Youth: COMMUNITY

- Need to counter rejections by family/peers/religious affiliations (NS's)
- Build networks where they can see their identities reflected
- Provide info and facilitate socialization opportunities
- Strengthen family bonds (+family acceptance)



# Building Resilience for Queer Youth: Coping Skills

- Meditation, CBT, mindfulness
- Harm reduction, sexual health, mental health
- Create individualized safety and self care plans



# Building Resilience for Queer Youth: Resources

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- Social Capital
- transit tickets, clothes, food
- build inter-agency partnership for access to what is needed to build resources (ex: queer advisory board)

# HF4Y Core Principle #4: Individualized and Youth-Driven Supports with No Time Limits or Preconditions



Today you are You,  
that is truer than true.  
There is no one alive  
who is Youer than You.

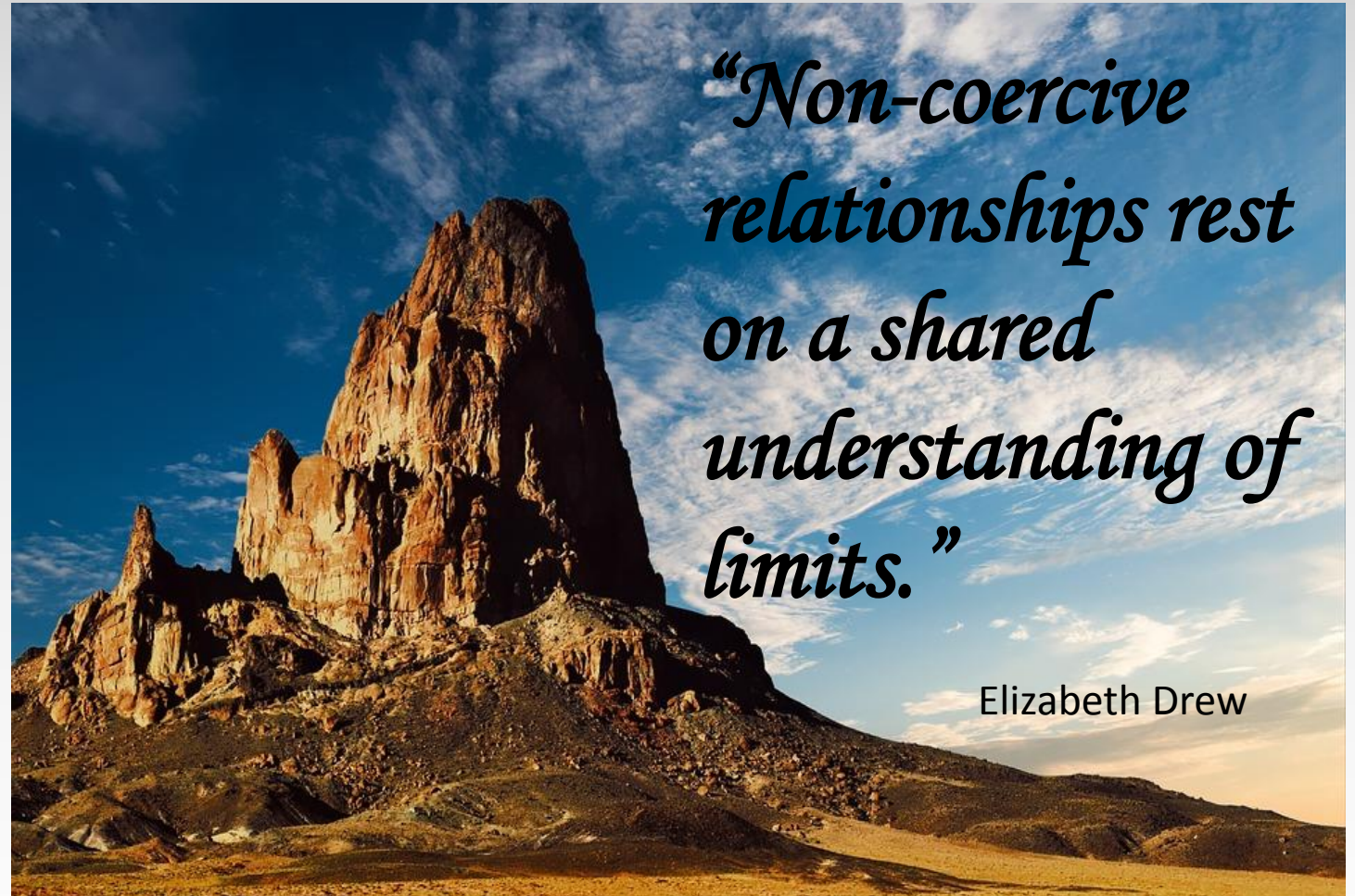
-Dr. Seuss



# Active Engagement

Supports are  
Assertive Not Aggressive

**Voluntary**  
**Individualized**  
**Culturally-Appropriate**  
**Portable/Mobile**

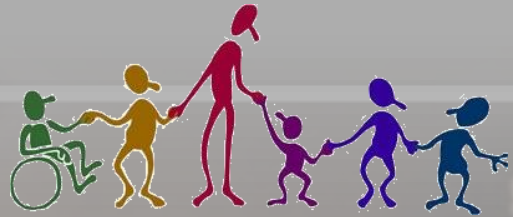
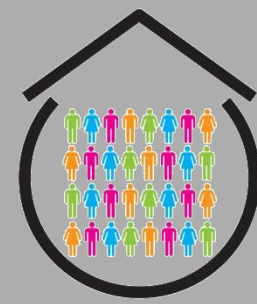
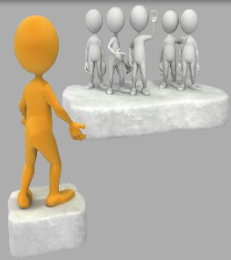


*“Non-coercive  
relationships rest  
on a shared  
understanding of  
limits.”*

Elizabeth Drew



# HF4Y Core Principle #5: Social Inclusion and Community Integration



How will you work to engage/  
incorporate “family and  
Natural supports” into your HF4Y  
practice?

# HF4Y: Philosophy or Program Model?



## Conditions

Believe is as much choice as possible and harm reduction



Permanent Supportive Housing



Youth Shelter



Rapid Re-housing Program



School

"HF4Y Friendly"



HF4Y Program

## Rules

Support Harm Reduction, conduct assessments, Refer to HF system of care.

## Policy Restrictions

Referrals, Individualized and professional supports, family connection

## Lighter Supports Lower Acuity

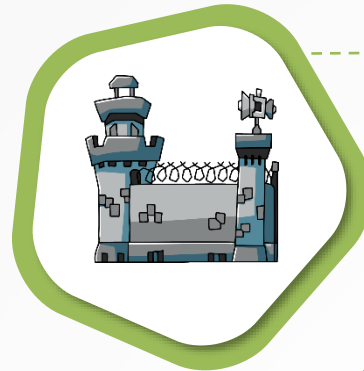
Critical Time Intervention time limited case management

INTEGRATED SYSTEM



## Leaving Child Protection

57% were once in care,  
Eliminating compliance factors



## Discharge from Corrections

Discharge planning, immediate housing, connection and supports



## Family Reconnect

Case management, mediation, establish natural supports



## Indigenous Programs

HF4Y with cultural engagement

# HF4Y ADAPTATIONS





# What does a HF4Y Program Look Like?

Team Lead

Case Managers

Housing Location/Liaison

Peer Support

Possibly: addiction specialist, mental health specialist, other clinical staff

# Housing Specialist/Locator/Liaison



## ➤ Liaison

- Team & Landlord
  - Landlord & Consumer
- Manage landlord relations
- Tenancy and property management
- support
- Provide awareness of problems
- Important for both ACT and ICM

# Peer Support/Specialist

- ∅ Regular team member if possible.
- ∅ Collaborate in development of service plans
- ∅ Outreach, case management, advocacy and other services in all environments.
- ∅ Provide a “You can do it too” attitude
- ∅ Resource for other team members
- ∅ Help with all things housing.



## Additional Options

**Stipends**

**Honorariums**

**Volunteer**

# An Important Piece of the Puzzle



- Rent Supplement
- Rent Stipend
- Top up on shelter allowance
- Other rental assistance programs

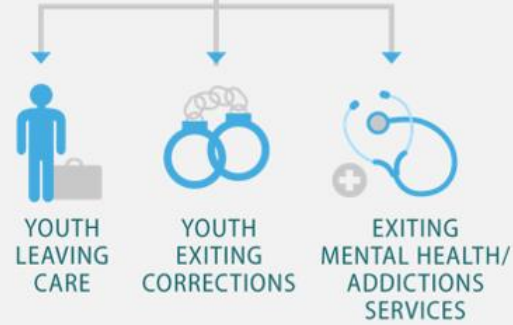
How is the rent paid?

How does Rent Supplement relate to program outcomes?

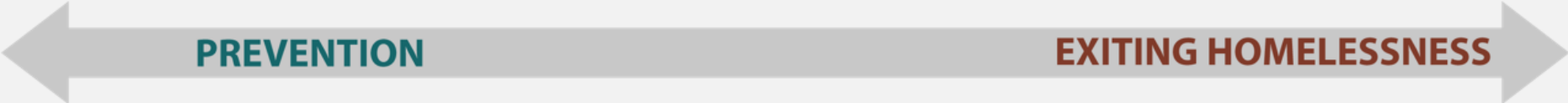




**EXITING SYSTEMS**



**HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH**



# Program Outcomes



## 1) Housing stability

- Obtaining housing
- Maintaining housing
- Enhancing knowledge and skills regarding housing and independent living
- Reducing stays in emergency shelters



## 3) Education and employment

- Established goals for education and employment
- Enhanced participation in education
- Enhanced educational achievement
- Enhanced participation in training
- Enhanced labour force participation
- Improved financial security



## 2) Health and well-being

- Enhanced access to services and supports
- Improved health
- Food security
- Improved mental health
- Reduced harms related to substance use
- Enhanced personal safety
- Improved self-esteem
- Healthier sexual health practices
- Enhanced resilience



## 4) Complementary supports

- Established personal goals
- Improved life skills
- Increase access to necessary non-medical services
- Addressing legal and justice issues



## 5) Social inclusion

- Building of natural supports
- Enhancing family connections
- Enhancing connections to communities of young person's choice
- Strengthening cultural engagement and participation
- Engagement in meaningful activities



# End of Day 1





**Prioritize**  
Highest Risk for  
Long Term Homelessness

**Caseloads**  
Balanced  
7:1



# Engagement

Clarify Expectations

Home Visit, Pay Rent, Good Tenant

Person Centered Planning

Service Plans

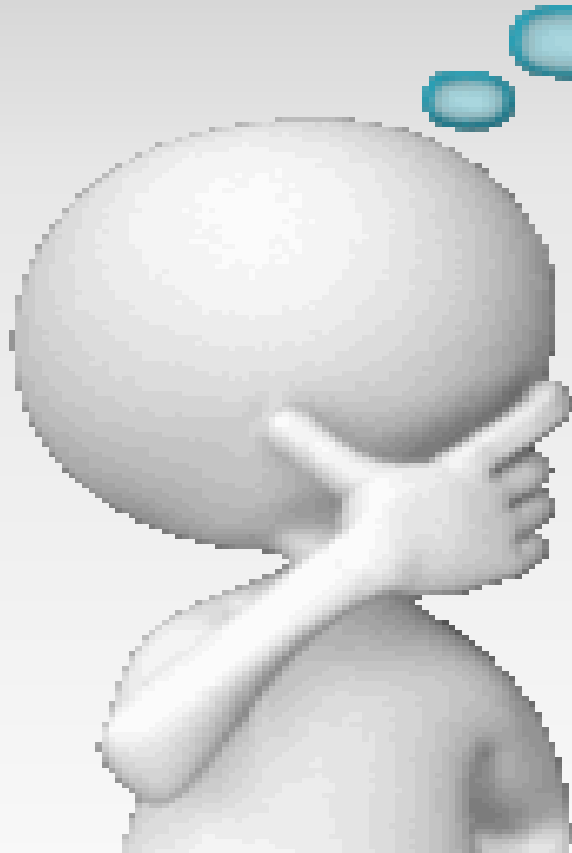
Crisis Plans

Graduation Plans

Housing Search

How do we offer assertive engagement and authentically honor client choice?

# Housing Choice



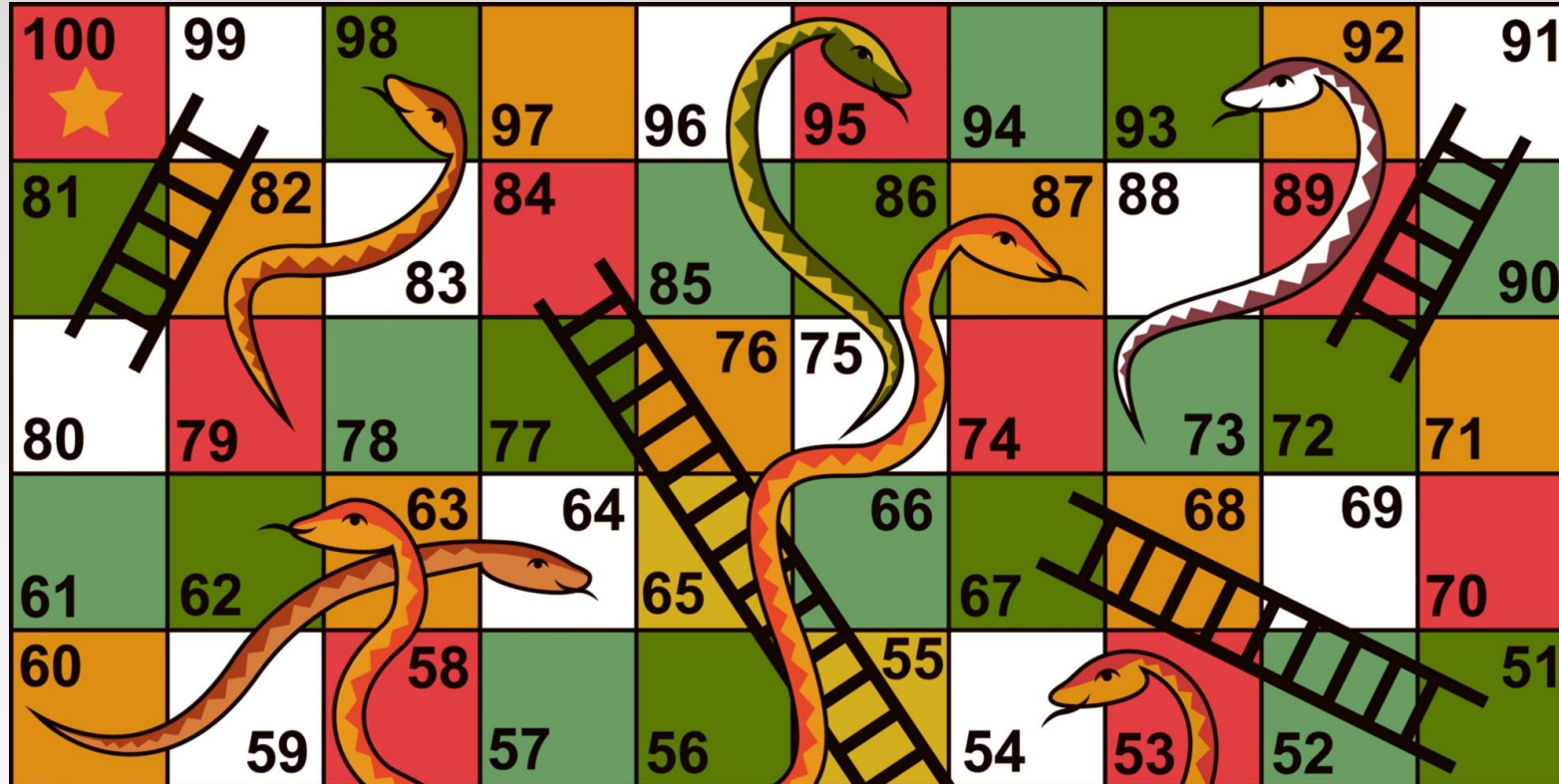
Hmmm. Let me see.

- ✓ Where would I like to live?
- ✓ What type of building?
- ✓ What type of unit?
- ✓ Do I want roommates?
- ✓ What amenities would be helpful?
- ✓ What are my transportation needs?

**The Better the Match**  
**The More Likely the Success**



# What if the Youth Wants to Wait for a Unit of their Choice?



Do they  
lose their  
Spot on  
the Priority  
list?



# Viewings



Who?  
What?  
When?  
Where?

# Landlords as Program Partners



1

- Ongoing HF Education and Involvement
- Honesty (without breach) & Follow Through (Visits)
- Separation of Housing and Services

2

- Agency and landlord communication (two-way)
- Team is responsive to Landlord Concerns
- Support Landlord in Normal Tenancy Decisions

3

- Agency works to ensure rent is paid on time (3<sup>rd</sup> Party)
- Landlord ensures fair tenancy and attention to unit needs.
- Plan for furnishings and tenant damages

4

- Operating business while giving back
- Advantages of using rental market (economy improvement)
- More economical than congregate sites.

# Why Many Landlords Like HF



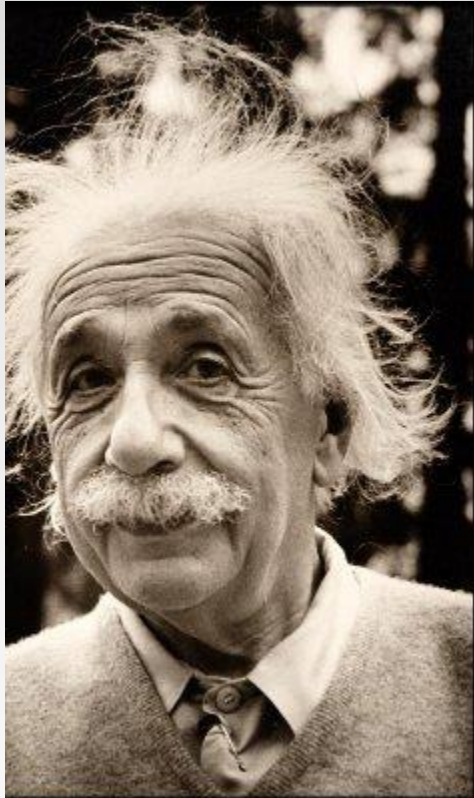
- A reliable income stream
- Access to support team
- No rent loss due to vacancies
- Working with the program elicits their help in a greater cause



How many times do you rehouse someone?

- a) 2 times
- b) 3 times
- c) 4 times
- d) endless
- e) depends on the individual

# Principles of a Strengths-Based Approach



Everybody is a genius.  
But if you judge a fish by its  
ability to climb a tree, it will  
live its whole life believing  
that it is stupid.

*-Albert Einstein*

*EmilysQuotes.Com*

- **ALL PEOPLE**, have a **CONTINUING CAPACITY** to learn, grow and change in the context of a supportive relationship
- The focus is on the individual's interests and **STRENGTHS** rather than on their defocots or psychopathology ("strengths-based support")



# Wrap Around

- **Services offered not mandated**
- **Continue through housing loss**
- **Off-site of participants home**
- **Should be mobile often**



# Should offer wide variety of options.

## Formal Informal



BREAK TIME

# The Art & Science of....

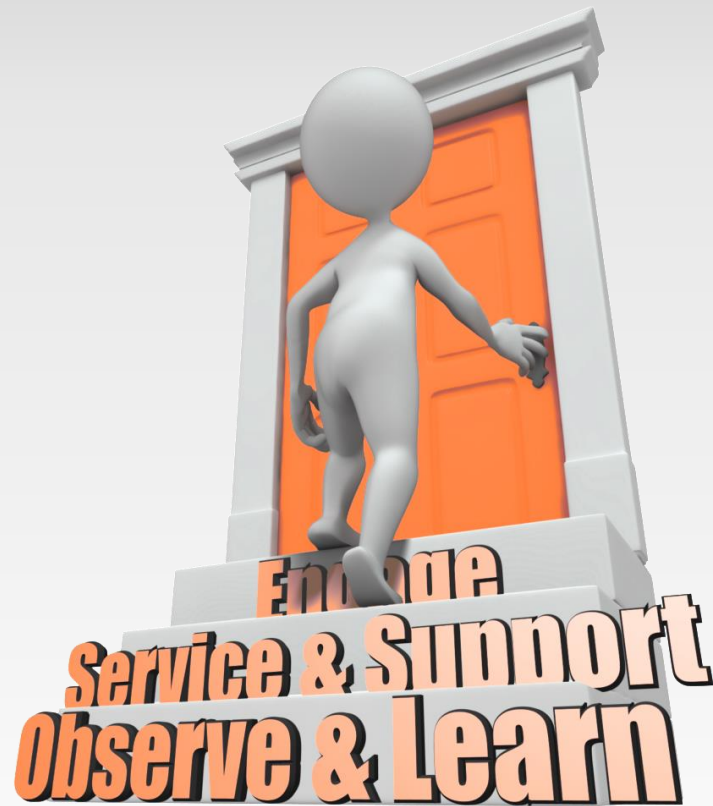






# Home Visit Fundamentals

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- Visiting someone in their home is a privilege
- Power Differential
- Respect boundaries
- Respect space, duration, biorhythm

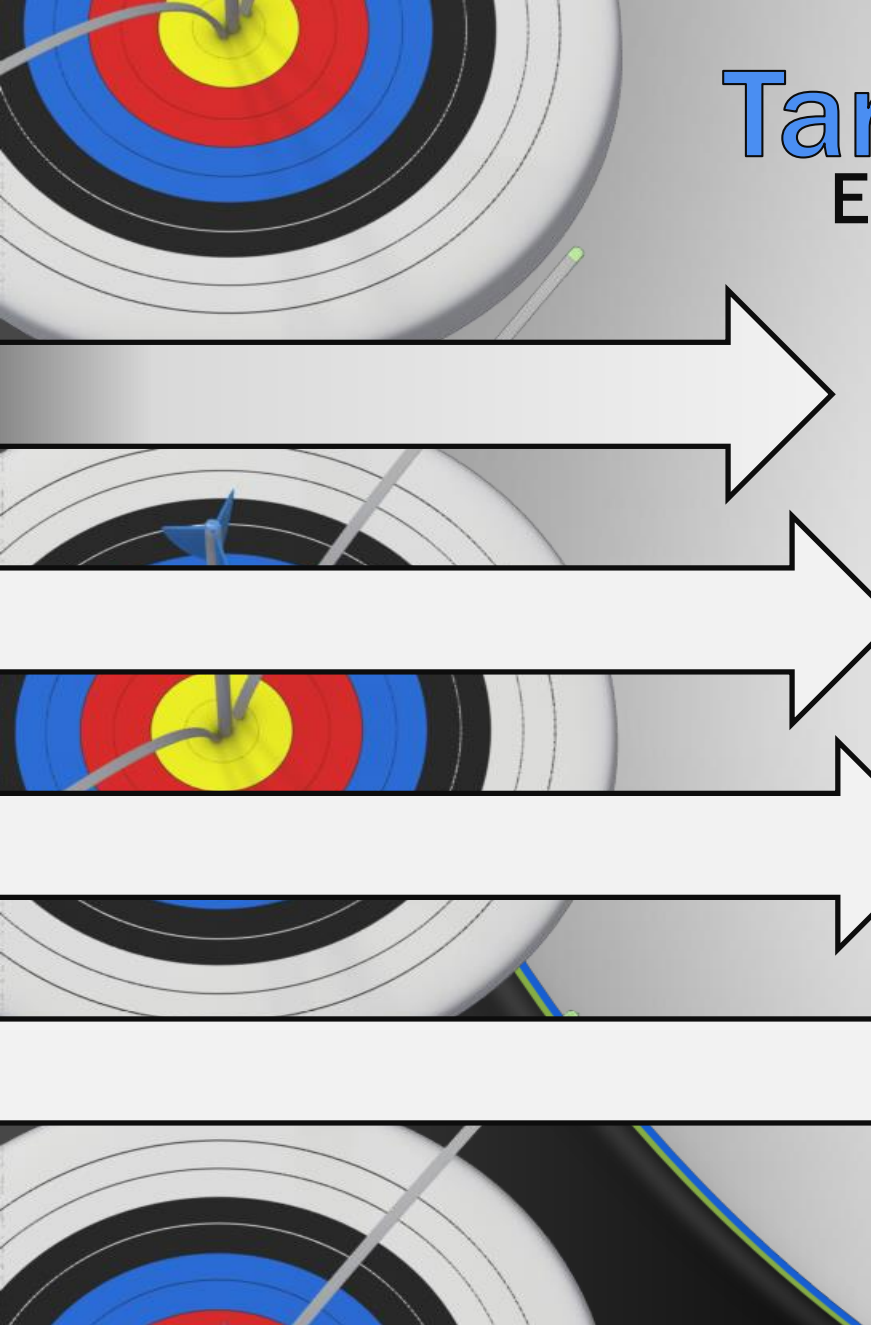
# Amount of Contact



- Depends on the person's need and teams assessment
- Person's needs vary over time
- Standard arc –high to low
- It is non-linear process
- Minimum visits

# Targeted Intervention

Engage, Assess, Provide



Each home visit should be purposeful and goal directed.

Strength based and client driven based on their chosen goals.

Encourage, support, motivate, and explore.

Interventions or plans can extend from home to community.





# Engage & Assess: Environmental Data (Participant)

- ∅ How is the apartment decorated? Condition? Are there personal effects?
- ∅ How is the space being used or not used (bedroom)?
- ∅ Is anything missing?
- ∅ Observe baseline and departures from baseline





## Engage & Assess: Environmental Data (Community)

- ∅ Has tenant located needed services?
  - § Amenities, Shops, Clinics, Transportation
  - § Places of Worship, Self-Help, etc.
- ∅ Other unmet needs or interests?
- ∅ Is their community in their neighborhood?



# Know, Known, Missed

## Engage & Assess: Environmental Data (Participant)

- ∅ How does the tenant manage relationships with Neighbors; Building Management; Others:
- ∅ Neighborhood, Community, Ethno-Racial Mix; Soioeconomic Mix
- ∅ Sense of Safety; Stigma; Prejudice; Discrimination?



# Home Visit vs Therapy Session

## Different

- ❖ Time/duration
- ❖ Environment, setting
- ❖ Available material
- ❖ Casual and broader conversation



## Same

- ❖ Roles, boundaries, ethics
- ❖ Content is always about the consumer
- ❖ Intention is always focused on healing/growth towards goals



# Assess Well-being: Establishing a Baseline

## How is the person today?

- Their greeting
- Clothing
- State of alertness
- Mood
- Changes from usual patterns
- Condition of Apartment



# Discuss Connections and Needs Related to Services & Support

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## ➤ Responding to a concern

➤ Consumer

➤ Landlord

➤ Physical

➤ Mental Health

➤ Medication support

➤ Social support

➤ Community Integration

➤ Religious institutions or self help groups

➤ Cultural

➤ Inclusionary



# HOME VISIT DILEMMAS





Do we intervene?

When do we intervene?

And how do we intervene?

# “Looks like we have guests!”

## Who is the guest?

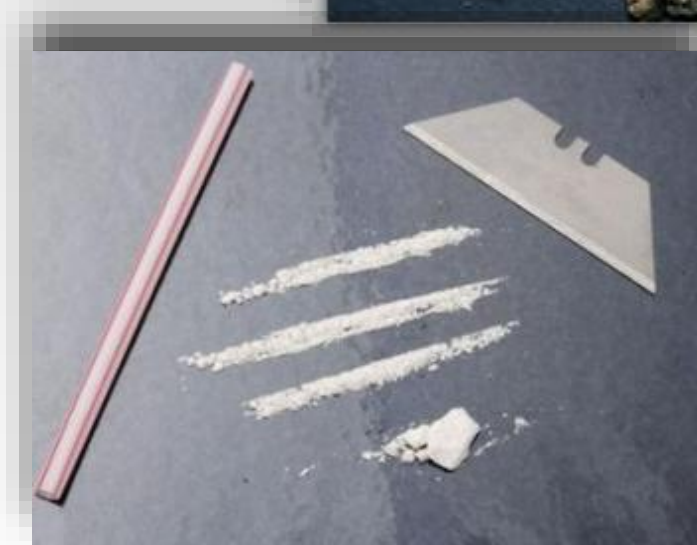
**A. You**

**B. The tenant’s friends**



# What do you do?

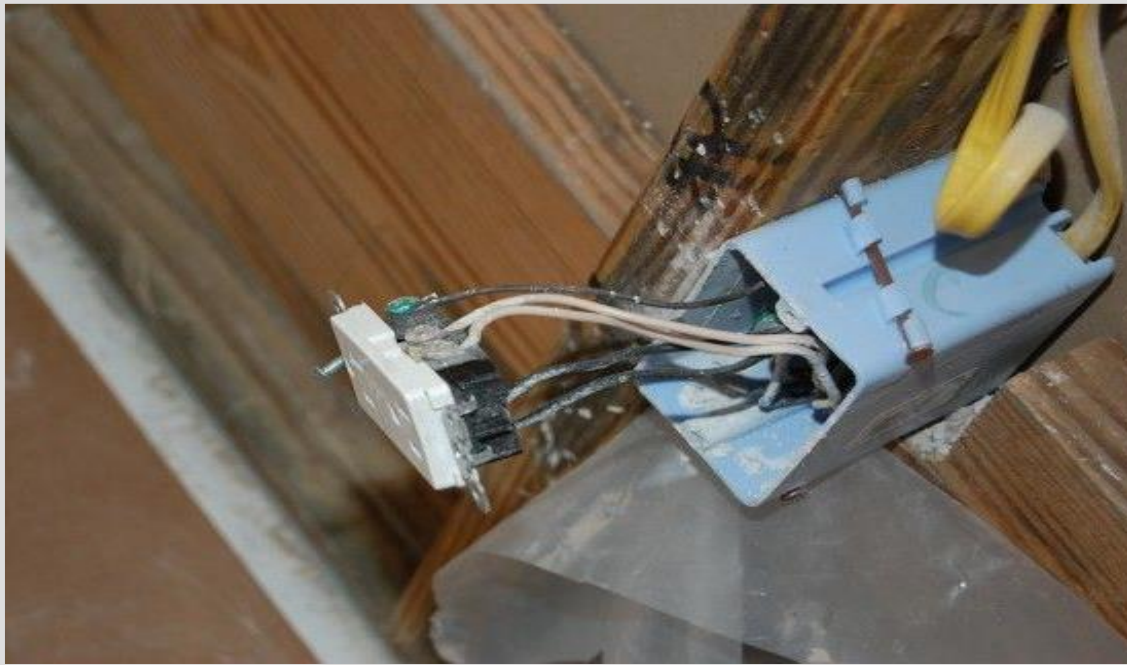
1. **Leave immediately and tell the person to clean it up**
2. **Report to landlord**
3. **Report to your Supervisor**
4. **Talk to the youth**





Whose job is it to report these problems?

- A. Youth**
- B. Case Manager**
- C. Superintendent**
- D. Housing Specialist**



# When the person does not answer...

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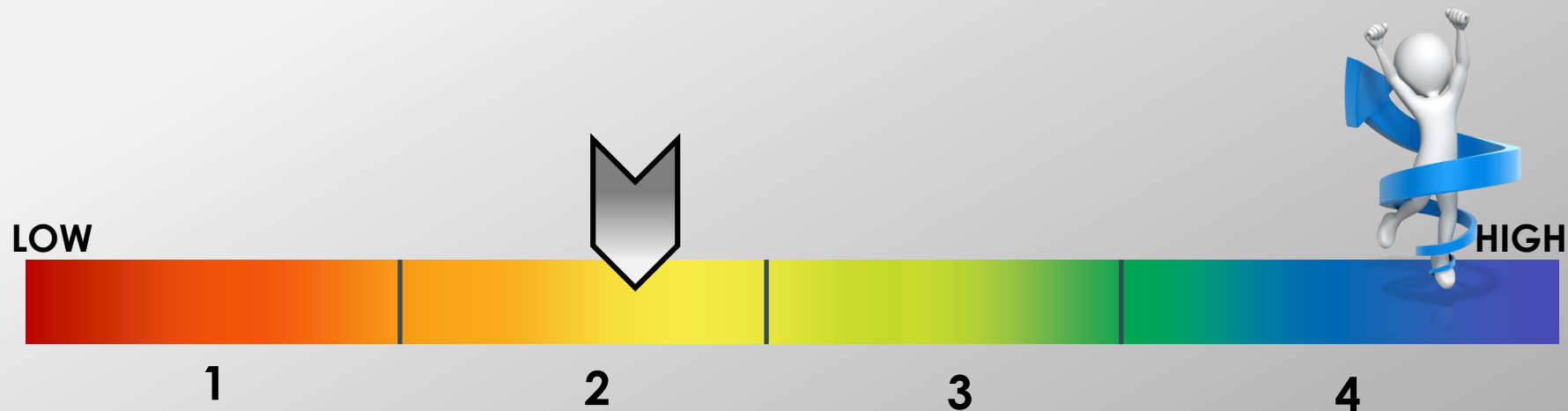
- A. Return later that day?
- B. Stick with the schedule and return on the next scheduled visit?
- C. Leave a note?
- D. Wait for the person to call you?



- How assertive is assertive?
- How do we balance choice and voice here?



# HF4Y Fidelity Elements



**5 Domains**

**52 Elements**



# Anything Else?

