

THIS IS  
HOUSING FIRST  
FOR YOUTH

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**WEBINAR**

# Part 1

## *Why* Housing First for Youth?



# When we let young people become homeless ...



# When we let young people become homeless ...

- **Health worsens**
  - **Mental health declines**
  - **Exploitation**
    - **Greater risk of addictions**
    - **Involvement with the law**
    - **Dropping out of school**
    - **Trauma and criminal victimization**
    - **Entrenchment in life on the streets**



# *How are youth different from the adult homelessness population?*

- Age
- Adolescent development
- Experience
- Dependency and supports



# Key question:

## Can Housing First be adapted for youth?



“We suggest considering modifications of "Housing First" to maintain fidelity to core principles while better meeting the needs of youth”.

Kozloff et al., (2016) **At Home / Chez Soi**





# A framework for Housing First for Youth (2014)





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Homelessness**

[homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca)



**National Learning Community  
on Youth Homelessness**

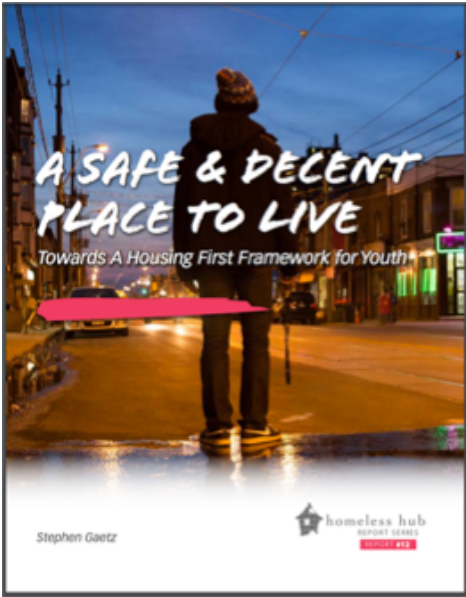
**A WAY HOME  
VERS UN CHEZ-SOI**  
CANADA



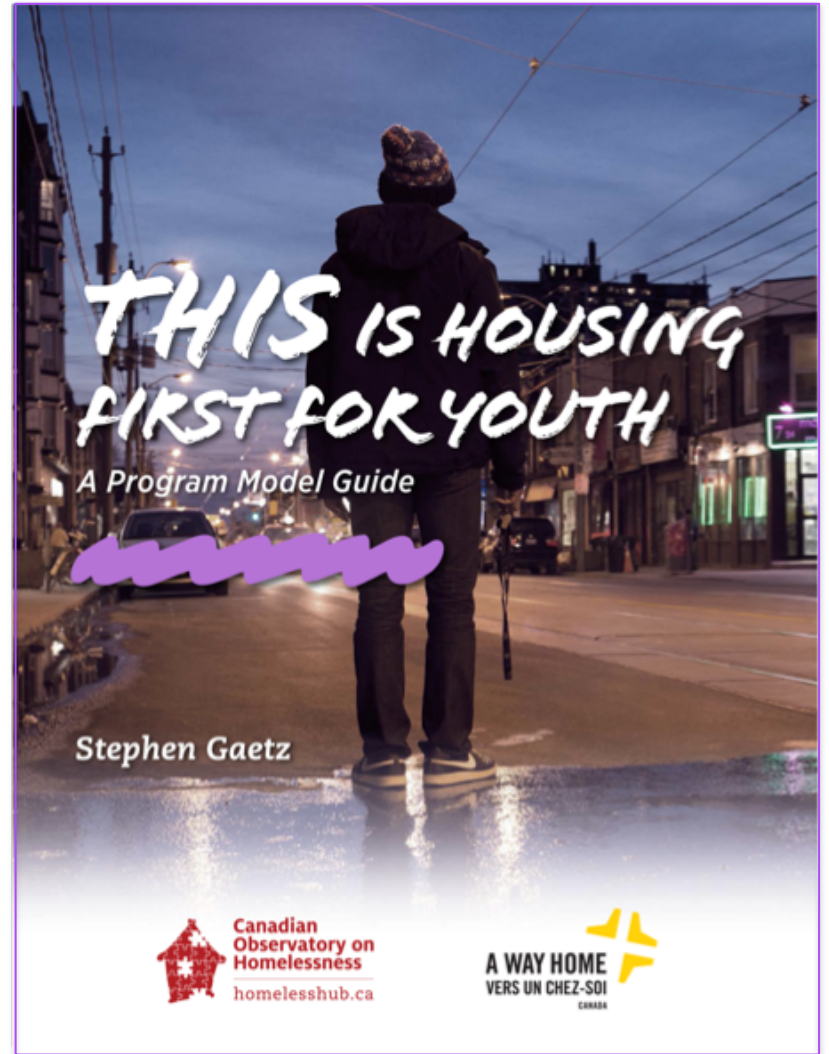
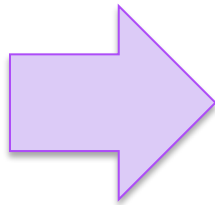
# Part 2

*THIS is* Housing  
First for Youth!





2014



2017

**The importance of  
developing a  
response based on  
the needs of young  
people.**



# WHAT IS HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH?

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, well-being, life skills, engagement in education and employment, and social inclusion.

# THE CORE PRINCIPLES OF HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH

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.

## The core principles of HF4Y include:

1. A right to housing with no preconditions
2. Youth choice, youth voice and self-determination
3. Positive youth development and wellness orientation
4. Individualized, client-driven supports with no time limits
5. Social inclusion and community integration

# 7

## A Right to Housing with No Preconditions

*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 where non-compliance leads to a loss of, or a denial of, access to housing.*

- What does “no preconditions” mean?
- Separation of Housing and Supports





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## 2 Youth Choice, Youth Voice and Self-Determination

- What does *CHOICE* mean?
- Limits to choice?
- Putting choice into action!

THE CONCEPT OF SELF-DETERMINATION ACKNOWLEDGES THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD BE IN CONTROL OF THEIR OWN LIVES, AND BE ENCOURAGED TO MAKE DECISIONS AND LEARN FROM THEM.

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# 3 Positive Youth Development and Wellness Orientation

The HF4Y model employs a “positive youth development” orientation, a strengths-based approach that focuses not just on risk and vulnerability, but also youth’s assets. A positive youth development approach:

- Identifies the youth’s personal strengths in order to build self-esteem and a positive sense of self
- Works to improve the youth’s communication and problem-solving skills
- Enhances and builds natural supports, including family relationships
- Assists the youth in personal goal setting
- Helps the youth to access educational opportunities and identify personal interests

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## 4 Individualized, Client-Driven Supports with No Time Limits

### *Active engagement without coercion*

In doing so, one must consider:

- Supports must be flexible in terms of time frames.
- The needs of young people will evolve over time.
- What the worker thinks the young person needs or wants is not necessarily what they want for themselves.
- It may take a long time to build a trusting relationship to engage in this kind of work.
- Young people should be encouraged to focus on positive change and to learn from mistakes.
- The importance of harm reduction
- Consider the impact of trauma and disabling conditions

# 5

## Social Inclusion and Community Integration

- Housing models should not stigmatize clients
- Make available opportunities for social and cultural engagement
- Build natural supports
- Ensure opportunities to identify and engage in meaningful activities



# Part 3

## *Models of Accommodation & Supports*






# MODELS OF ACCOMMODATION

**In a community, there may be a range of housing options that support young people at risk of, or who experience homelessness.**

Figure 2: Models of accommodation within a HF4Y framework





# THE RANGE OF SUPPORTS



**The HF4Y model offers a broader range of supports than what is typically associated with Housing First targeting adults.**





1. HOUSING SUPPORTS



2. HEALTH & WELL-BEING



3. ACCESS TO INCOME & EDUCATION



4. COMPLEMENTARY SUPPORTS



5. SOCIAL INCLUSION

# 7

## Housing supports

- *Help in obtaining housing*
- *Housing retention*
- *Rent supplements*
- *Support when things go wrong*
- *Aftercare*



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## 2 Supports for health and well-being

- ***Trauma informed care***
- ***Mental Health***
- ***Substance use and addictions***
- ***Harm Reduction***
- ***Healthy Sexuality***
- ***Personal Safety***



# 3

## Access to income and education

- *Income supports*
- *Training*
- *Employment*
- *Education*



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# 4 Complementary Supports

- ***Life skills***
- ***Adult support and mentoring***
- ***Supporting young people with children***
- ***System Navigation and Advocacy***
- ***Peer support***
- ***Legal supports***



# 5

## Enhancing social inclusion

- ***Developing social relations***
- ***Family Reconnect***
- ***Community engagement***
- ***Cultural engagement***
- ***Meaningful activities***

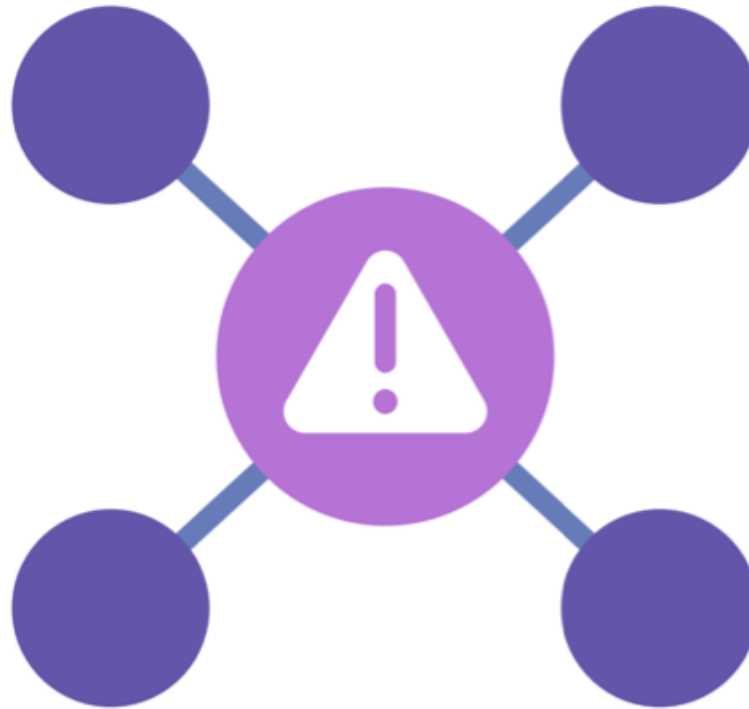


# Part 4

## *Considerations for Service Delivery*

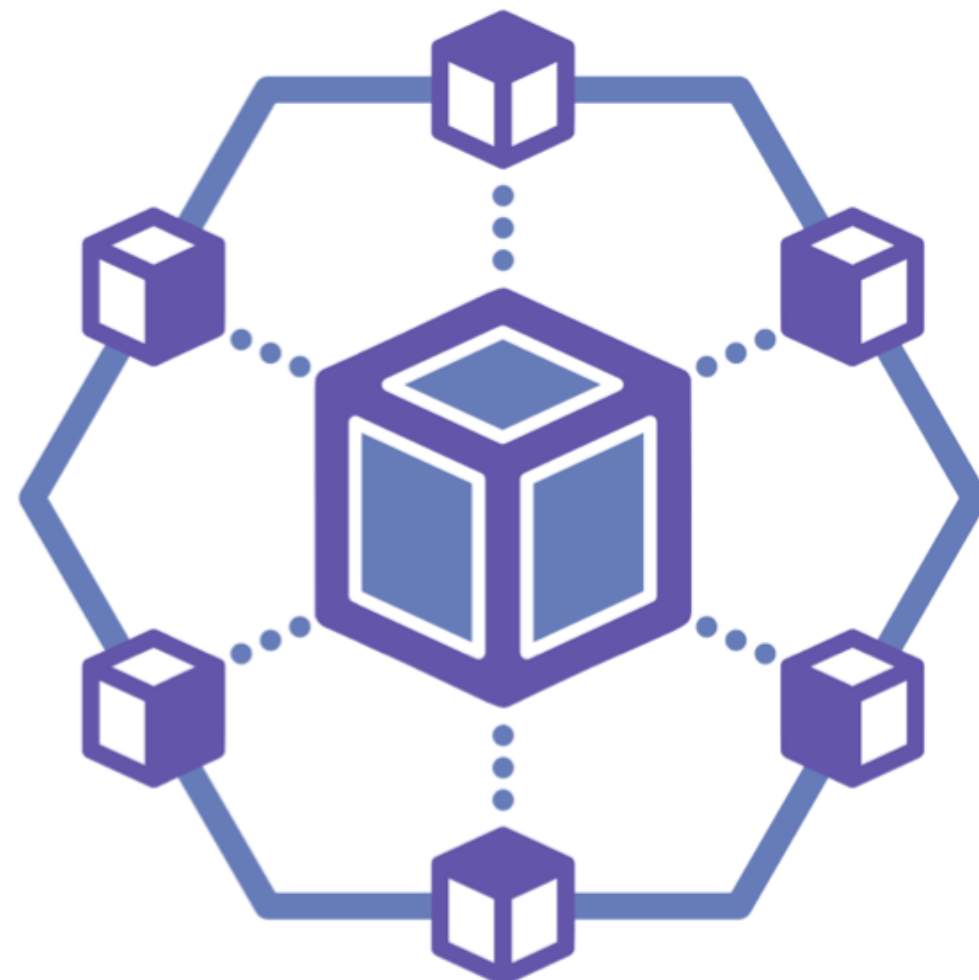
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# Prioritization





# Embedding HF4Y within an integrated systems response



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# Program outcomes



## 1) Housing stability

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



## 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



## 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



## 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

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# Case work and case management

## Good Case Management

- Client driven
- Effective assessment
- Collaboration and Cooperation
- Right matching of services
- Contextual case management
- Evaluation for Success



# Consider the importance of Family and Natural Supports



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# Caseloads

*“Caseloads numbers should be carefully balanced. When considering the impacts of including family and natural supports, complexities of targeted groups (LGBTQ2S, Indigenous) and the potential of managing crisis, caseloads in excess of 7 should be avoided.”*

Kim Kakakaway – Homefire Support Worker, Boys and Girls Club of Calgary

**Each youth has a primary worker  
but consider Shared Caseload**



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# Working with Landlords



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# Rent and Income Supplements







# DATA MANAGEMENT

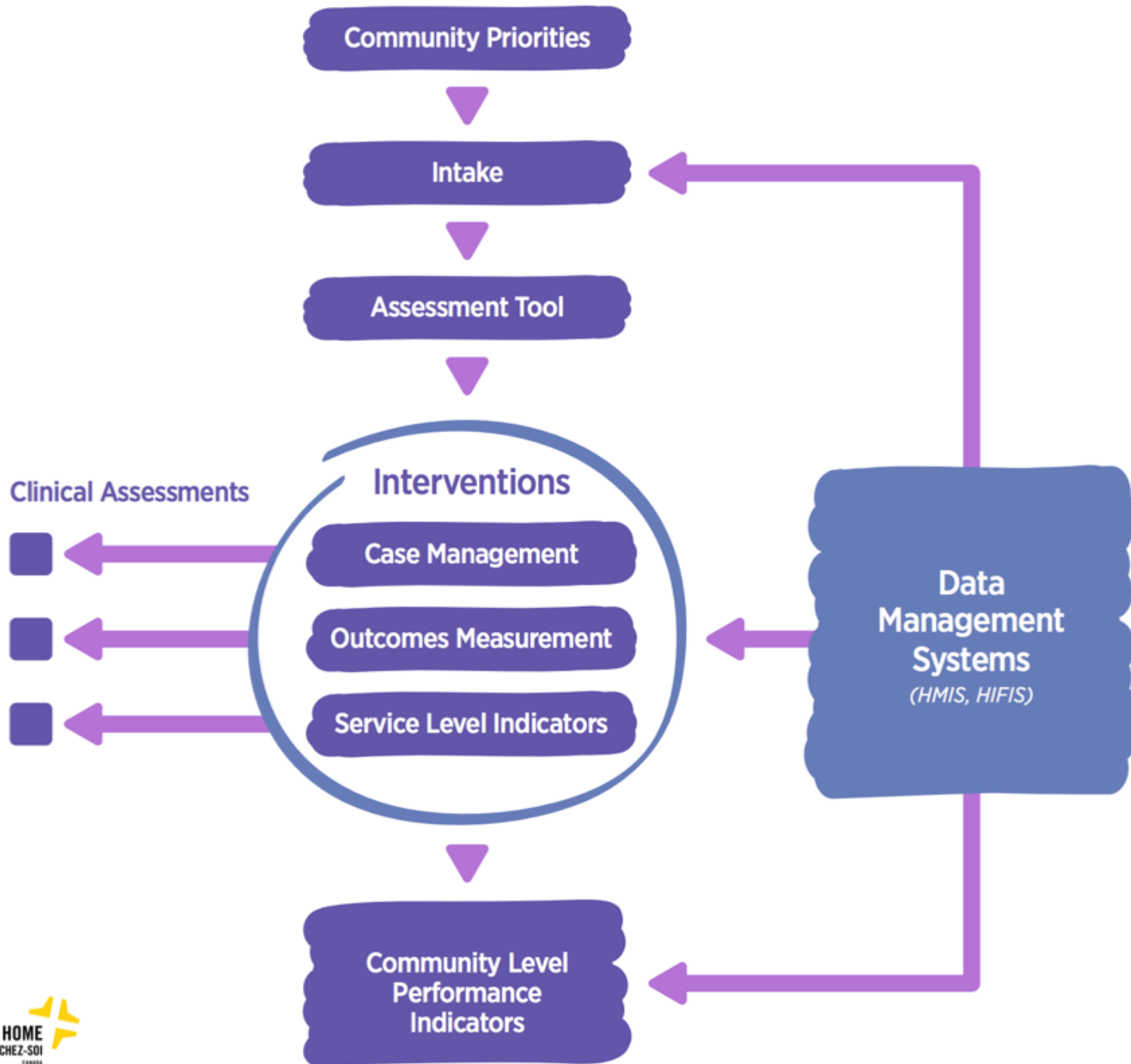
Effective data management is important to support the work of HF4Y. It begins with clarity about organizational goals and objectives: what is the problem one is trying to solve and what are the outcomes we want to see?



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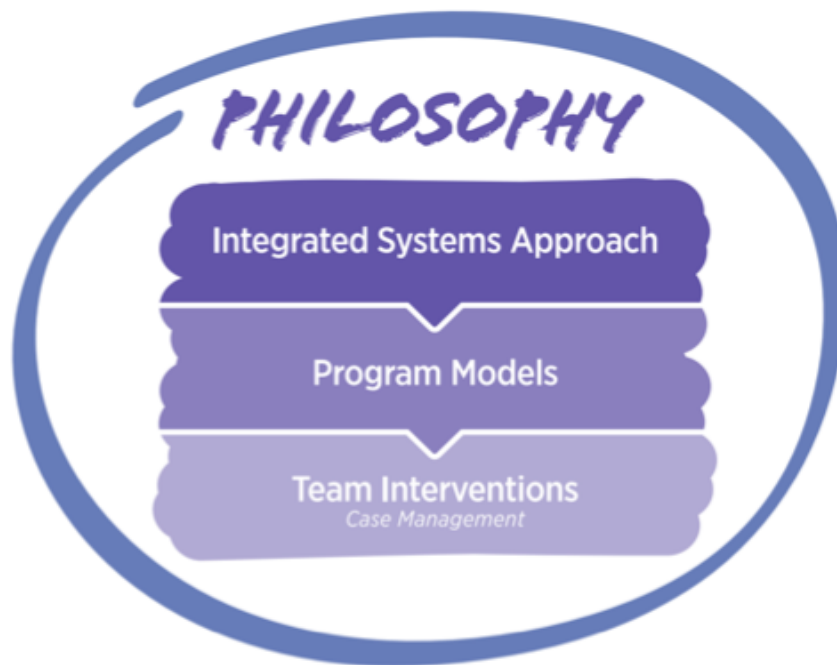


# Part 5

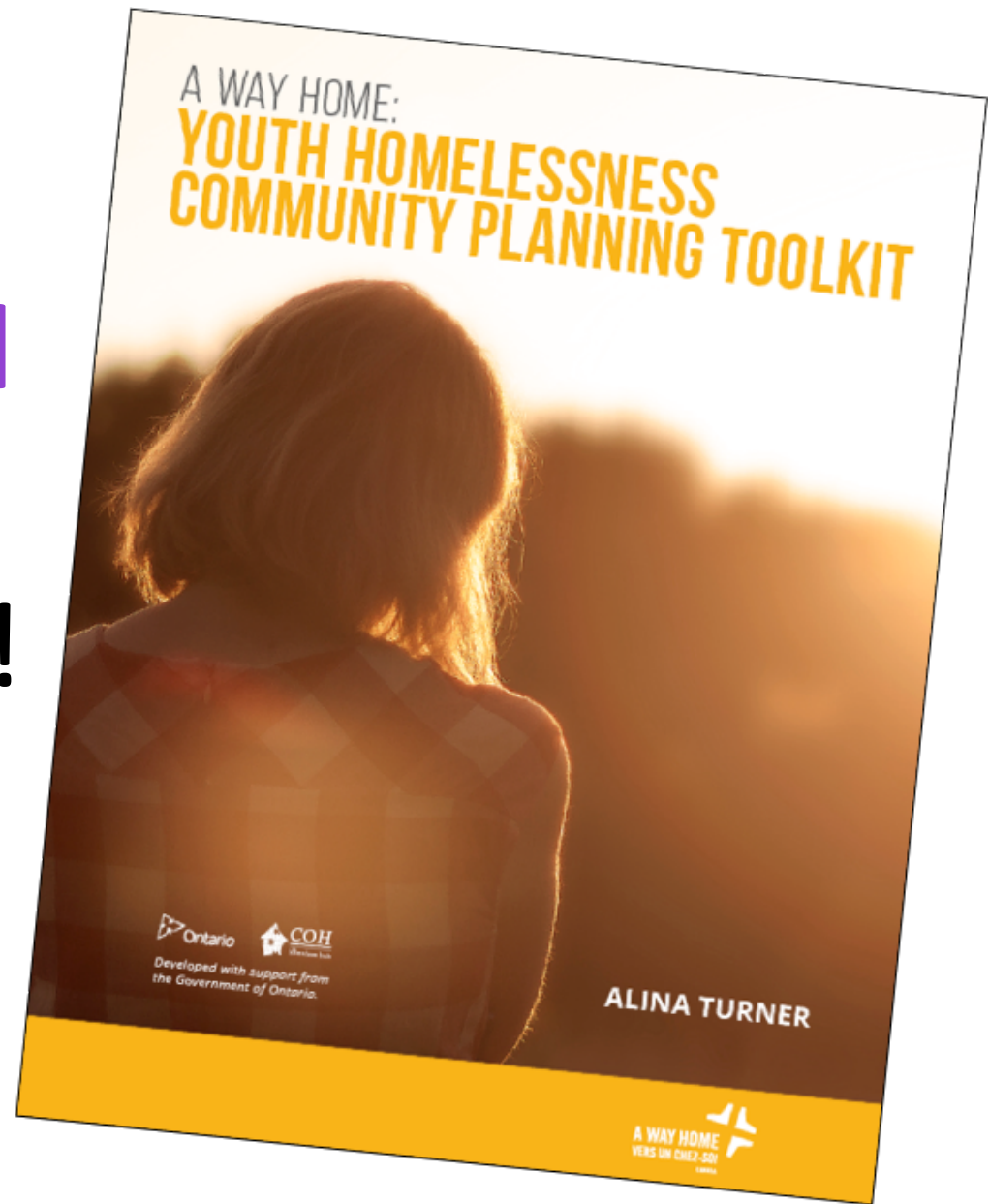
*How do we get there?*

# HF4Y – A PHILOSOPHY AND A PROGRAM MODEL

It is important to address the question of whether HF4Y is a program or philosophy – it is actually both.



# Can guide targeted **Plans** to **Prevent and** **End Youth** **Homelessness!**



In communities of *any size*, the response to youth homelessness can be driven by these principles.



# HF4Y Program Model

## An Aspirational Goal



# Part 6

## *Building the evidence base*





# Making the Shift



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[homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca)



# Canada

This project is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Youth Employment Strategy program



# Making the Shift

## Project: Phase ONE

**A WAY HOME**  
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[homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca)



2 Provinces, 10 Communities,  
DOZENS of Community Partners



# Youth Homelessness

## Social Innovation Laboratory

### Strategic Partnerships

- Researchers
- Community
- Private sector
- Government
- Philanthropy
- Innovation
- Youth engagement

### International Engagement

- Canada
- United States
- Europe
- Australia

### Insight & Discovery

- Assessment of current knowledge base
- Gap analysis
- Identification of innovative policy and practice
- Prioritization of innovations for:
  - Demonstration projects
  - resource development

### Demonstration Projects

- Plan and implement pilot projects
- Demonstrate "proof of concept" in Canadian context
- Rigorous research on program effectiveness
- Developmental and Outcomes evaluation

Research  
EVIDENCE  
Base

### Resource Development

- Youth homelessness prevention framework
- Peer reviewed research articles and reports
  - Evaluation reports
- Online Toolkit and resource development
- Resources for technical support

### Knowledge Mobilization

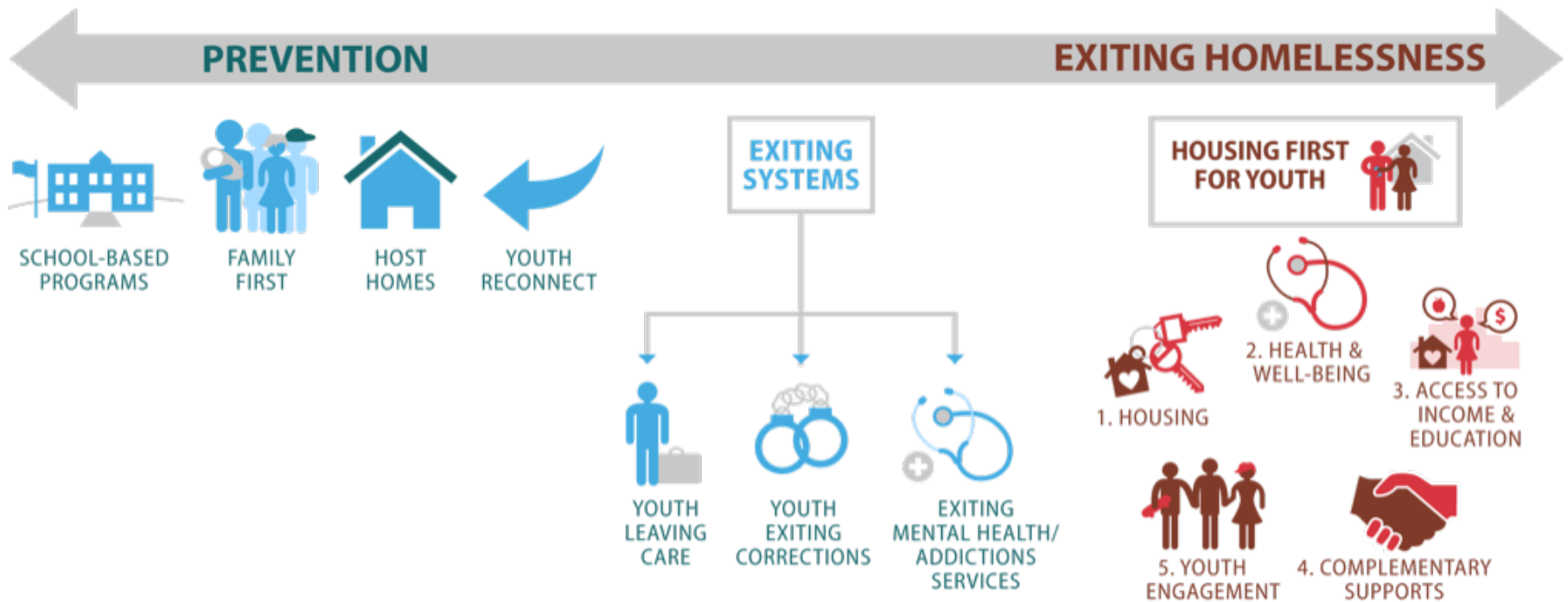
- Communications and Marketing Strategy
- Community engagement strategy to identify local capacity and readiness
- Government relations strategy to align policy and practice
- Private sector & philanthropy

## OUTCOMES

- Supporting communities and government to transition from crisis response
- Taking effective prevention policy and interventions to scale
- Prevention and ending of youth homelessness

# Canadian Demonstration Projects

## Building the Evidence Base



# Housing First for Youth Demonstration Projects

## Ottawa:

- Housing First for Youth

## Toronto:

- Housing First for Youth (leaving care)

## Hamilton:

- Housing First for Youth (Indigenous)



# Research and Evaluation

## Research:

- Control trial – interviews at three month intervals
- Control groups in each city
- Quantitative and qualitative methods
- Outcomes tied to service and supports
- Positive youth development orientation (strengths-based approach)

## Evaluation:

- Developmental Evaluation
- Outcomes Evaluation



# Research Team



**Sam Tsemberis**  
Clinical Director



Many key researchers  
from **At Home/chez Soi**



# Questions or comments?

[www.homelesshub.ca](http://www.homelesshub.ca)

[www.AWayHome.ca](http://www.AWayHome.ca)



# Resources

- A Way Home Canada Youth Homelessness Community Planning Webinar #6: Serving Youth Better: Introducing the Youth Homelessness Assessment and Prioritization (YAP) Tool | September 2017  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2tWVawRwZ18&feature=youtu.be>
- THIS is Housing First for Youth: A program model guide:  
[http://www.homelesshub.ca/HF4Y?\\_ga=2.121375695.694991686.1517236497-29638153.1506525847](http://www.homelesshub.ca/HF4Y?_ga=2.121375695.694991686.1517236497-29638153.1506525847)