

## #HHChat October 22nd, 2014

We chatted about youth homelessness and the role of schools, family and community. We were joined by our guest contributor Michael Lethby who is the Executive Director of Niagara Resource Service for Youth, the RAFT.

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RAFT released a report on their first major review of the Youth Reconnect program the morning of the tweet chat. The Youth Reconnect program provides advocacy, life skills training, one-on-one mentoring, emergency hostel access, family reunification and community integration. The report found positive outcomes. From the youth who participated in the program, 80% were housed at discharge and 86% were house in the region they were from. Additionally, since there were fewer youth staying in shelters, the RAFT program was able to save money in multiple sectors.

Download the report: [bit.ly/1t4c4jm](http://bit.ly/1t4c4jm)



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We began our tweet chat at 1PM (ET) starting with some introductions:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Welcome everyone to today's tweet chat! Introduce yourself as you join us and make sure to use [#HHChat](#) for today's conversation.

 21 DAYS AGO



**RaY Inc.**

@RaYWinnipeg

It's time to start [@homelesshub](#)'s on youth homelessness. Join the convo at [#HHChat homelesshub.ca/hhchat](#)

 21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

We are joined by [@MichaelLethby](#) Executive Director of [@NiagaraRaft](#) Niagara Resource Service for Youth. [#HHChat](#)

 21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

[.@MichaelLethby](#) will be helping us to answer questions today on prevention of youth homelessness. [#HHChat](#)

 21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

Hello [@MikeLethby](#) here [#HHChat](#)

 21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@homelesshub](#) Avg. citizen advocating poverty & homelessness [#HHChat](#)

 21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

#hhchat shelba waldron from Pinellas County, Fl.



21 DAYS AGO



**Subz**

@Sabzzi

Hello from Cambridge, ON social worker here eager to share thoughts and listen #hhchat



21 DAYS AGO



**Kate**

@Kaseykate2012

Hello from simcoe on #HHChat



21 DAYS AGO



**Valerie Douglas**

@v\_a\_l\_e\_r\_i\_e\_x

Lurking here from South of the Border! ;) #HHchat



21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Our format for today will be question and answer. We will post the questions and everyone is welcome to contribute answers. #HHChat



21 DAYS AGO

Question 1:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q1: What are some of the reasons why youth become homeless? #HHChat



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

@homelesshub A1: Family conflict, instability. Speaking from experience #HHChat



21 DAYS AGO



**Kevin Cooper**

@KevCooper27

@homelesshub The lack of support and understanding towards youth problems creates a disengagement and a sense of lost self. A1



21 DAYS AGO



**Valerie Douglas**

@v\_a\_l\_e\_r\_i\_e\_x

A1: A recent study in the US across 11 cities have 1/2 the youth reporting they were asked to leave the home. #HHchat



21 DAYS AGO



**Valerie Douglas**

@v\_a\_l\_e\_r\_i\_e\_x

@homelesshub Study I mentioned: Street Outreach Program Data Collection Project Executive Summary [acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/...](https://acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/) #HHchat



21 DAYS AGO



**Sean Polden**

@seanpolden

[@homelesshub](#) A1: I became homeless at 16 because I didn't agree with parents religious beliefs and was forced to leave. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A1 1/2 Youth Homelessness is ultimately a symptom of a trauma suffered by a family [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A1 2/2 This trauma is offend discussed by youth we serve as conflict or a problem at home [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@MichaelLethby](#) Agreed. [#HHChat](#)

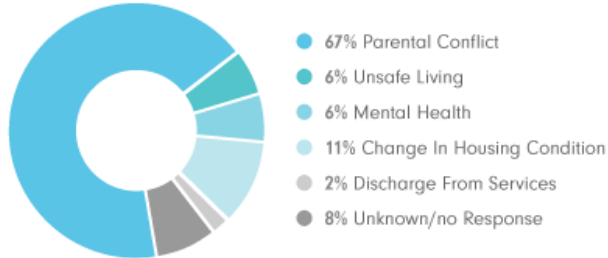


21 DAYS AGO

## AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO SOLVING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN RURAL CANADA

Results of a 5-year review of the RAFT's Youth Reconnect Program

### REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS



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



**Marta Liddiard**  
@M4Merritton2018

@homelesshub @NiagaraRaft I would say this is bang on. #HHChat

21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**  
@ShelbaWaldron

#hhchat A1: Foster children who have left the system or aged out of the system

21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**  
@ShelbaWaldron

#hhchat A:1 LGBT children who aren't accepted by family

21 DAYS AGO



**Subz**  
@Sabzzi

#HHchat A1 born into poverty, foster system, socio economic conditions

21 DAYS AGO



**Subz**

@Sabzzi

A1 [#HHchat](#) 2/2 society's response. Landlords refuse to house, stigma surrounding youth, mental health



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A1 poverty can be the case but we have many youth coming from middle and upper income families however once homeless all are poor [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO

Question 2:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q2: 2. What can communities do to prevent youth homelessness? What is your community doing? [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**RaY Inc.**

@RaYWinnipeg

A2. Creating supportive environment and understanding youths' needs are different. 14yrold diff from 21yrold from 29yrold. [#hhChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@homelesshub](#) A2: Be better at recognizing the warning signs of conflict, issues at home which lead to a family falling apart. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**RJ Babbitt**

@rbabbitt

Q2: support youth aging out of foster and in-placement care. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Sean Polden**

@seanpolden

[@homelesshub](#) A2: Mental health and counseling supports in schools (where youth are) & more info on help available needed. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Subz**

@Sabzzi

A2 1/2 Better supports and services for youth. Access to affordable housing, addressing root causes of poverty [#HHchat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Subz**

@Sabzzi

2/2 [#HHchat](#) using a trauma informed lens in our community towards youth



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[@Sabzzi](#) Trauma informed communities is vital. [#hhchat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**RJ Babbitt**

@rbabbitt

Q2: program that places LGBT youth in family foster placement with LGBT parents [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO





**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A2 1/3 Communities can start efforts to prevent homelessness as opposed to managing it through emergency services like shelter [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A2 2/3 Review who are the youth using services often we found that many rural youth are moving to the urban centres for help [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A2 3/3 Niagara has supported Youth Reconnect which aids youth to stay in school find housing, stay in their home communities [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A:2 We have to first make sure the homes the children come from are stable. Most children end up homeless, because of family issues.



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A2--Working w/families who struggle w/ substance abuse, mental health, and job loss goes a long way in curbing child homelessness.



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) JWB in Florida brings providers together every Friday to discuss family and youth homelessness and work to find practical solutions



21 DAYS AGO



**Julie McKercher**

@JulieMcKercher

[@homelesshub](#) [#HHCHAT](#) Q2 - not enough! And for rural youth - we can't even capture their pathways to services.



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

[@JulieMcKercher](#) [@homelesshub](#) We do know that rural youth are students before they become homeless



21 DAYS AGO



**Sonya Keith**

@sonyakeith

[@JulieMcKercher](#) [@homelesshub](#) are there services?



21 DAYS AGO



**Julie McKercher**

@JulieMcKercher

[@sonyakeith](#) [@homelesshub](#) [#HHchat](#) few and far between. Migration out of "supportive" community and into urban centres seems to b the pathway



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

[@JulieMcKercher](#) [@homelesshub](#) [@sonyakeith](#) Very true



21 DAYS AGO

Question 3:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q3: We know conflicts within family often lead young people to the streets. How can family reconnection play a role in prevention? [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A3 1/2 Reconnection can help prevent however by the time reconnection is tried too much damage has often occurred [# HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A3 2/2 Reconnection is most useful when it allows time for conversation and healing to occur and keeps families in contact [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A:3 It's more than just family reconnection. It's family counseling and community support at the school, church, and work level.



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A3 Using the framework of the Protective Factors is crucial. Helping families understand that they have more strengths than weaknesses



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**  
@M4Merritton2018

@homelesshub A3: That may not always be possible, it depends what that conflict is. But yes, help the family. #HHChat

 21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**  
@homelesshub

@marta4merritton You're right, many leave very difficult home lives. We talked about it further here: [bit.ly/1zkKmTZ](https://bit.ly/1zkKmTZ)

 21 DAYS AGO

#### Question 4:



**Homeless Hub**  
@homelesshub

Q4: What are some strategies that schools can implement to help prevent youth from becoming homeless? #HHChat

 21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**  
@MichaelLethby

A4 1/2 Schools are not designed to deal with all the social ills that can happen to their students #HHChat

 21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**  
@MichaelLethby

A4 2/2 Schools need to partner with trusted community service to allow each to succeed #HHChat

 21 DAYS AGO



**Jesse Donaldson**

@Donaldsonjesse

[@MichaelLethby](#) [@homelesshub](#) A4 Agreed! It's unfair to ask the schools to address homelessness without giving them support to do so [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

[@Donaldsonjesse](#) [@homelesshub](#) When all you have is a hammer every problem is a nail [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@MichaelLethby](#) Their needs to be a bridge between the two [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**IG:ElMonique**

@PinkRoses21

[@homelesshub](#) have a class that deals with finance.. Investing.. And money management..



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@homelesshub](#) A4: Implement peer lead groups where kids can help kids. A la breakfast club. Create a culture of safety, reduce stigma [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Jesse Donaldson**

@Donaldsonjesse

[@homelesshub](#) A4: Teachers & Admin must be open to the idea that homelessness can (and probably does) happen in their schools [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) We have to first stop thinking in terms of just schools. Stopping youth homelessness is a community issue. School, church, business



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A4 Engage churches, businesses, youth sports, nonprofits, and govt. Trauma informed, protective factors frameworks.



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) Personally, I believe the more we support caregivers and stop tearing them down for every mistake, the more the family will succeed.



21 DAYS AGO



**RaY Inc.**

@RaYWinnipeg

.@ShelbaWaldron As our ED @Kellyholmesray likes to say, "It sometimes takes a village to raise a child" [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO

Question 5:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q5: Would this response differ between urban and rural communities? What have your experiences been? [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A5 1/2 Only in that urban schools have traditionally offered more crisis services and so have built a stronger system internally [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A5 2/2 However in my experience at-risk youth tend to be concentrated in a few “specialist” schools [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A5 So many urban schools wouldn't have any more significant experience than rural schools [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@homelesshub](#) A5: Responses would be similar, strategies would be different. Not as many resources at fingertips in rural communities [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**IG:EllMonique**

@PinkRoses21

@marta4merritton @homelesshub Big cities have so many ppl. any program that's available have limited everything. Homeless in NY. Normal sight



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

@PinkRoses21 @homelesshub @KimKatrinMilan 1/2 I like the retelling of Mali story...communities build homes for the homeless.



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

@PinkRoses21 @homelesshub @KimKatrinMilan 2/2 4 every homeless there are 26 homes Enough to get everyone off the street & turn profit #HHChat



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

#hhchat whether it's rural or urban, if the community doesn't work to bring all stakeholders to the table, then you just bandaid the issue



21 DAYS AGO



**Julie McKercher**

@JulieMcKercher

A4 (?) #HHChat again, the pathways to service for rural youth facing homelessness are out of the rural and into the DT zone of dependence.



21 DAYS AGO





**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

[@JulieMcKercher](#) Interesting point Julie. This ties into our last tweet chat on the geography of services with [@kyleplanman](#) [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

[@homelesshub](#) [@JulieMcKercher](#) [@kyleplanman](#) In Niagara the youth quite literally flow down the HWY eventually ending up in T.O. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Julie McKercher**

@JulieMcKercher

[@MichaelLethby](#) [@homelesshub](#) [@kyleplanman](#) What could be scarier/less supportive than that scenario?



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

[@JulieMcKercher](#) [@homelesshub](#) [@kyleplanman](#) it's not a very hopeful one, each stage just requires bigger and bigger shelters



21 DAYS AGO



**360°kids**

@360kids\_york

[@JulieMcKercher](#) A4 [#HHchat](#): We provide an unique one-stop shop for homeless & at risk youth right here in rural York Region. [360kids.ca](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Julie McKercher**

@JulieMcKercher

[@360kids\\_york](#) is this a model that can be shared and adapted in other rural areas? Might be interesting to hear how your organization works.



21 DAYS AGO

Question 6:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q6: What are some benefits for youth who remain in their community when accessing support services and acquiring housing? [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A6 1/4 Ultimately involvement with social services is a worst case scenario, removing youth or forcing that to leave [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A6 2/4 in order to reach service isolates them and forces a service dependence [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A6 3/4 social service largely mimic natural supports that a youth has developed over years [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A6 4/4 for every natural support removed a paid social service support must be introduced [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A6 Staying in the area allows for familiarity w/the transportation, social, school, university, and economic systems.



21 DAYS AGO



**Marta Liddiard**

@M4Merritton2018

[@homelesshub](#) A6: Stability. These kids have so much on their plates, it is could to have familiarity. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO

Question 7:



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Q7: What models can you point to that have had successful strategies for preventing youth homelessness? [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

A7 Youth Reconnect in Niagara is showing strong results but more can be done [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) A7--Having a 211 system. HEAT teams in schools. A backbone organization to bring stakeholders to the table. Trauma Informed Comm.



21 DAYS AGO



**Shelba Waldron**

@ShelbaWaldron

[#hhchat](#) If we are to ever end homelessness (any type) concrete supports and social connections are crucial to the puzzle.



21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

We are now nearing the end of the chat. Big thank you to [@MichaelLethby](#) for taking part. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Michael Lethby**

@MichaelLethby

Thanks for the opportunity to participate in my first Tweetchat !  
[@homelesshub](#) [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO



**Homeless Hub**

@homelesshub

Thanks everyone for participating! Our next tweet chat will be in November on the new findings of the [#SOHC2014](#) report. [#HHChat](#)



21 DAYS AGO

**YOUTH CARE** YouthCare  
@YouthCareSEA

MT @360kids\_york: Thank you to @homelesshub for hosting today's #HHChat & allowing an open discussion about youth homelessness!

 21 DAYS AGO

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Make sure to take part in our next tweet chat in November. Find all the details about upcoming chats at this link: [homelesshub.ca/hhchat](https://homelesshub.ca/hhchat)

### Homeless Hub's Monthly Tweet Chat #HHChat

A tweet chat is a scheduled conversation on Twitter that is linked by a specific hashtag. A hashtag is a combination of words/numbers that follow the '#' symbol and are used to link information together. It allows for conversations to be easily tracked. We will be using #HHChat.

 HOMELESSHUB