Surviving or Thriving?

Avoiding Youth Transitioning from Care to Homelessness in Vancouver

February 2018
CI TRRUST - Our Story

Since April 2014, more than 100 individuals representing 40 organizations, government ministries and youth have developed a collective impact (CI) approach to support youth aging out of care in Vancouver. In 2014, a small group of influential champions learned about collective impact and gathered stakeholders with an interest in working differently to impact the outcomes for youth aging out of care. In 2015, funding from the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver Foundation, and the Federation of Community Social Services of BC made it possible to hire a part-time project manager. The initiative worked through processes to reach consensus on a shared vision, collective principles, youth engagement practices and established a governance structure. Young people with lived experiences in care created journey maps to guide the actions of the collective.

Stakeholders and a strong group of young leaders (all with government care experience) committed to move forward to Phase 2. Further funding was received from the Vancouver Foundation and the City of Vancouver to continue the work of the collective.

Shared Vision: Invest in youth by creating equity of access to meaningful experiences, caring connections, and opportunities for growth based on individual needs, wants and readiness.

McCreary Centre Society became the backbone organization in July 2016 and continues to provide the infrastructure and support for the collective. Phase 2 put the governance into practice: formalizing the Strategic Advisory and forming a Collective Young Leaders (CYL) advisory. The CYL raised awareness of the issues facing youth aging out of care locally and provincially by sharing their journey maps with organizations, governments and the school board. The initiative was given the name CI–TRRUST (Collective Impact – Transition in Resources, Relationships and Understanding Support Together). TRRUST has brought together most organizations and ministries in Vancouver that work with youth in and transitioning from care (Appendix D presents a list of our stakeholders). Our developmental evaluations demonstrate a high level of willingness to move towards the shared vision, increased trust among service providers, more intentional collaboration and a sense of hope that systemic change is possible.

CI TRRUST created five clusters (sub groups) to assist in developing action strategies for the shared vision: caring connections, employment and education, housing, meaningful experiences and shared measurement. The larger collective meets quarterly to reach consensus on action strategies, get updates on the work of clusters, share learning, keep abreast of research and programs/services, and evaluate progress.

In 2017, the initiative moved into action based on action plans developed by the clusters. Highlights of our successes include:

- The hosting of an annual event connecting youth aging out of care with services and the provision of transition kits (funded by MCFD)
- This research on housing for young people aging out of care (funded by the Vancouver Foundation)
- An employment survey that will guide actions to improve employment success for youth aging out of care
- Hosting of social events to help youth in and from care develop social support networks

With continued financial support from the City of Vancouver and other funders, CI TRRUST is well on its way to have a substantial impact on the outcomes for youth transitioning from care in Vancouver.
TRRUST Collective Impact would like to thank the Vancouver Foundation and Fostering Change for funding this research. We would also like to thank our housing cluster for their guidance and McCreary Centre Society for their wisdom and support. Heartfelt gratitude to the 50 youth and young adults who engaged in our research by completing surveys and participating in focus groups.
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Executive Summary

The city of Vancouver is one of the most expensive Canadian cities to live in. Housing affordability has been a major concern for more than a decade. People that called Vancouver home are leaving because they can no longer afford to live here. Rental units are typically on and off the market in less than 24 hours, and single room occupancy rates have risen almost 40% since 2009 (Carnegie Community Action Project’s 2016 Hotel Survey & Housing Report). Homelessness among youth and young adults is increasing in Vancouver.

Youth age out of government care on their 19th birthday in BC. Approximately 110 youth age out of care in Vancouver each year. Unlike their parented peers, they find themselves without the support or the resources needed to cope on their own, and approximately 40%, will transition to homelessness (Homeless Hub, Foster Care studies; Simon Fraser University Foster Care Report, 2015).

Youth researchers supported by TRRUST collective impact completed this report with the aim of enhancing our understanding of the housing situation for young people aging out of care in Vancouver. The research consists of an inventory of housing for youth and young adults, a youth survey and focus groups, a review of housing models, an economic analysis and concludes with recommendations. Thirty-six housing providers representing 61 housing sites were interviewed: a total of 741 beds were identified in Vancouver with 20 available in July 2017. Housing sites included shelters, safe houses, supportive housing, transitional housing, drug and alcohol treatment, group homes, single room occupancy hotels and non-profit or social housing.

The report includes data from 56 youth who participated in focus groups or completed a survey. It also includes an economic analysis which looks at potential income sources and housing costs. The report concludes with a number of recommendations that TRRUST members will review and prioritize at the next collective gathering. The housing cluster will further develop the results of TRRUST feedback and take action on while engaging stakeholders to play an active role to ensure Vancouver’s youth find stable and safe housing prior to their transition from government care.

Key findings include:

- When the interviews for this project were conducted a total of 741 housing units were available in Vancouver (excluding market rentals). There is a very limited number of units for youth – the majority of housing units in this report are available to young adults 19 and over.

- There were 314 supportive housing beds available. Most were full and many providers are operating a waiting list.

- There were 125 transition beds available. Most were full and many providers are operating a waiting list.

- There were 175 non-profit and social housing beds and 15 subsidies. Most were full and many providers are operating a waiting list.

- The research identified 81 shelter beds. Most were full and some providers are operating a waiting list.

- Forty-six other types of housing beds were identified (including family care giver models and group homes.) A few vacancies existed and some providers operated waiting lists.
• All youth survey respondents had experienced some kind of precarious housing in their lifetimes.

• The most common barriers to finding housing were lack of support, lack of affordable and safe housing and age discrimination. Three out of four youth reported having trouble keeping housing. When asked about helpful resources, 76% of the respondents to our survey wanted an adult to help them secure housing, co-sign leases, and access subsidies.

• Among those who responded to the survey question, the majority got no help with housing when they transitioned out of care.

• Youth in the focus groups generally agreed with survey respondents about the barriers to finding and keeping housing. They also had additional suggestions such as having specialist one to one housing workers and peer mentors who have successfully transitioned to independent living.

• Youth in the focus groups also reviewed some current housing models and developed their own which included adult and peer support, a continuum of housing options, subsidies and sliding scale leases.

A 500 square foot bachelor suite in Vancouver costs on average $1,060 per month (CMHC, 2017). It would take a minimum of three youth aging out of care to make rent every month if they were on income assistance (the income assistance shelter allowance of $375 per month has not been increased in over a decade); two young people if they were on Agreements with Young Adults. A young adult making minimum wage would be expending 73% of their gross monthly income on rent.
Background

The Vancouver based collective impact initiative TRRUST (Transitions in Resources, Relationships and Understanding Support Together) identified housing as one of its key area of focus. A working group (cluster) was formed from a subgroup of collective members to look at improving outcomes for youth transitioning out of care in the area of housing and homelessness. The cluster identified a lack of information about housing options for youth transitioning from government care in Vancouver. A proposal to carry out a research project to better understand the housing options available to youth turning 19 and aging out of care was developed and funding secured from the Vancouver Foundation. The project was conducted between June and November 2017 and focused on the following components:

1. An inventory of housing options available for youth aged 19 to 24 including:
   i. Safe houses
   ii. Shelters
   iii. Transitional housing
   iv. Not for profit housing, social housing
   v. Subsidies
2. Market housing or likelihood of rental success
3. A Vancouver housing assets map
4. Analysis of key challenges and environmental considerations including:
   i. Gaps in availability
   ii. Waiting lists
   iii. Financial considerations and realities
   iv. Security of tenancy
   v. Economic realities for housing market
   vi. Culture of buildings, spaces
   vii. Barriers for youth in care or young adults out of care
5. Summary of housing models.

This report aims to inform the collective's priorities in addressing housing for the approximately 110 youth who transition out of government care in Vancouver every year. It is anticipated the research will be a catalyst to engage partners and other stakeholders to create innovative solutions that will provide safe and affordable housing while reducing youth and young adult homelessness.

"Aging out of care with no adult support led me to learn everything the hard way. I felt overlooked by my social worker when I aged out – ...discouraged from connecting with ministry supports, even discouraged about applying for the AYA program. (...) Looking back I wish I would have applied sooner as it has been really helpful to be connected. (...)"

You can have all the programs in the world but if youth aren't connected with them they don't do much good. If I had better mental health support (and/or connection with trustworthy adult), I feel I could have avoided my year long struggle with homelessness and several hospital visits. I wish I had been connected to programs before I aged out.”

Youth survey respondent’s comments
Methodology

All of TRRUST’s work has seen youth in and from government care take leadership roles. For this project, a young adult took on the role of project lead for 3 months, a summer student led the youth research and two more youth researchers worked on the project. The collective housing cluster provided feedback and guidance at varying stages of the research.

HOUSING PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

A 36 question housing provider interview script was developed for the youth researchers completing the interviews (Appendix A). The questions covered topics including eligibility criteria for housing programs, program expectations, and maximum duration of stay, subsidies, program capacity and wait lists.

A total of 61 housing sites were contacted to participate in 30 minute interviews. Approximately 35 of the 61 organizations represented shelters and single room occupancy (SRO) spaces funded by BC Housing. Several organisations operated multiple housing programs at multiple locations. A total of 36 interviews were completed representing all 61 housing sites. No providers of market housing were contacted. The interview data was entered into a combination of SPSS, excel tables and qualitative data documents. Analysis focused on availability of housing units, waitlists and types of housing provided.

YOUTH SURVEYS

A 23 question online youth survey was developed to assess the barriers youth in and from care experience trying to find and maintain housing. It was reviewed by McCreary Centre Society’s Youth Research Academy and members of the housing cluster (Appendix B).

Despite extensive advertising, only 31 surveys were completed. The anonymized data was entered into SPSS and analyzed. When percentages represented a very small number of respondents, the data were reported descriptively to reduce the risk of deductive disclosure.

HOUSING MODEL REVIEW

International and Canadian housing models were reviewed, and ten models were identified for further consideration as they related specifically to youth leaving government care.

YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

Three focus groups were facilitated at Covenant House, Aunt Leah’s and with the Collective Young Leaders. Approximately 25 youth and young adults participated. Participants reviewed the ten identified housing models, developed their own model and provided specific suggestions on strategies to support youth to attain stable housing.

ECONOMIC ANALYSES

Youth researchers located the allowable rental portion of rates for social assistance, disability assistance, Agreements with Young Adults and minimum wage. This information was used to determine economic realities for youth transitioning out of care based on market rental rates for Vancouver. Housing subsidy information was also considered.
Housing Providers

Overall Results

A total of 36 housing providers representing 61 sites were interviewed and self-identified as providing the housing types detailed in the table below.

Excluding market housing, a total of 741 housing units are available in Vancouver (a few are outside of Vancouver). Around two thirds are at full capacity all the time and 58% operate a wait list. Some programs do not keep waiting lists as they are referral based.
Program expectations: All housing providers had a signed agreement with residents and expectations of youth residing in their housing stock. These included being respectful and maintaining a non-violent environment. The majority of services expected participants to attend meetings and create some type of personal plan or goals. Nearly half of providers expected residents to attend life skills classes. Generally, most housing providers have a maximum length of stay. These varied from seven days to up to two years, or were based on age (with youth becoming ineligible when they turned 19 or 25).

Several housing providers have dedicated beds for specific populations of young adults. Please note that some providers' dedicated bed numbers are flexible and apt to change dependent on demand. As at July 2017, the following list identifies dedicated housing units:

- 93 for males
- 82 for females with 8 for mothers with babies
- 25 indigenous
- 22 LGTBQ2S
- 2 disabilities.

Housing Providers by Category

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

This category includes eleven housing sites. Ten interviews were completed with: The Lion Hotel, Family Services of Greater Vancouver Directions 10K, Aunt Leah’s House Thresholds, The Home, Kettle on Burrard, London Hotel, St. Helens Hotel, Hutchinson's Block, Lu’ma Housing, The SA Foundation, and The Genesis Program. This category has a total of 314 beds. At the time of the interview, only two out of eleven had spaces available. As a number of these sites are through BC Housing, the current waiting list is approximately 3,500 people and one provider had 12 people on their waitlist. Key themes for these providers are:

- All participants sign agreements – tenancy or participation
- Most are expected to participate in life skills programs, create transition plans and attend meetings with staff
- Exit processes range from a room inspection to helping participants move

More than half of the supportive housing providers reported having no maximum stay while the rest have age caps ranging from 19 to 24. Of those who have a maximum stay, the majority report being lenient and allowing young adults to stay past the age caps. A few housing providers offer mental health or substance abuse programs. If applicable, youth may be expected to attend. Eligibility is unique to each housing placement. Although most of these beds are not gender specific, 33 are Ministry of Children and Family Development or delegated agency referrals, 92 are dedicated to mental health, addictions and individuals living with AIDS and 8 units are for mothers with children. Most young people leave because they find another place or have reached the maximum age. Most sites offer the support of a worker on the premise. The exit process for some consists of a discharge planning session and a transition plan. Nine out of 10 interviewees reported offering some type of follow up process with youth.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Six interviews were completed with: Atira’s Imuoto, Inner Hope’s parental suite, Hollyburn’s Life Success Transition, Covenant House’s Rights of Passage, Salvation Army’s Belkin House and SOS Children’s Village transition to adulthood. This category has a total of 125 beds: 55 allocated to females, 58 allocated to males, 2 LGTBQ2S, 2 Aboriginal, 2
allocated to mothers with children and the balance unallocated. At the time of the interviews, three were at full capacity and space available at two: 2 SRO beds and 2 female beds available. Three had wait lists totaling 19 or more.

Key themes for these providers are:

- Most serve young people aged 18 to 24
- Young adults expected to sign an agreement
- All require a plan or goals
- Many of the requirements are individualised

Maximum stay is usually a year or when they age out of the program around age 24. Apart from the agreement requirement, half the transition housing programs expect residents to attend meetings with a staff member and create a transition plan or attend life skills programs. One program does have a curfew, weekly community meals and chores. One program’s requirements are set by the couple the young person is placed with. Eligibility varies with three providers accepting self-referrals, one is by referral and through an application process, another requires income assistance and lastly one requires full time work or school or a combination. Three did not have formal waitlists. One program provides a 24 hour service to house youth and therefore has no wait list. Most young people leave because they are ready to or they have reached the maximum age. A few mentioned youth leaving because they were not a good fit. Supports for this category tend to be individualized. Most have case management and some offer group activities and life skills. Exit processes varied considerably and were dependent on the individual moving. One provider stated youth continue to have access to the programs and services for life. Three providers have informal follow up processes and three have formal follow ups for up to a year including inviting alumni to events and socials.

**YOUTH SUPPORT**

This category includes seven different housing supports for youth. Interviewed for this category were: Watari’s East side Integrated Youth Team, RainCity’s LGBTQ2S youth housing first project, Aunt Leah’s HELPS/SEFFY, Spirit of the Children Society’s Housing First youth program, Aunt Leah’s The Link and their Friendly Landlord Network and Family Services of Greater Vancouver’s transition worker. These providers share the following themes:

- Participants attend meetings and are responsible for reaching out when they need support
- They have foster care or homelessness experience
- Participants leave when they are ready or no longer need subsidy
- Supports youth and young adults to become independent
- No formal exit process and informal follow ups

Three providers have no maximum stays, two have one-year maximums, one has a four month maximum and one is until their 30th birthday. Most of these programs have no expectation apart from respectful engagement with staff. Two offer home visits and most offer tenancy and rental education.

**Eligibility criteria:** Four programs require youth to have been in government care, three require demonstrated homelessness, one is specific to LGBTQ2S and another requires engagement in education. Participants generally leave because they have successfully found housing, no longer need subsidies or the subsidy runs out. Support provided includes transition workers, outreach workers, housing workers, transition kits and access to other services available at the organization. Three have maximum capacities, two are dependent on the number of landlords willing to rent to young people with rent subsidies and two do not have maximum stays. Four currently have waitlists: two for subsidies and two
for program spaces. Four have no exit process. With the exception of one support service that requires follow up at 6 months, 12 months and 24 months, all others have informal and voluntary follow ups.

NON-PROFIT AND SOCIAL HOUSING

This category includes seven housing sites and four providers. Four interviews were completed with: Aunt Leah’s Support Link, Acro Hotel, YWCA Metro Vancouver Housing Services, PCRS's Housing First, the Annex, and Thompson Court. **This category has a total of 175 beds and 15 subsidies. At the time of the interviews there were two spaces available and four had waitlists totaling 103. One provider stated the wait is approximately two years to get in.** Key themes for these providers are:

- All participants sign program agreements
- Meetings with a worker are essential
- Almost all are at full capacity
- There is minimal support or follow up once residents leave

Several have no maximum stays while others vary from the 19th birthday to a rough two year guideline. As some of this housing is assigned to single mothers, one provider's maximum stay is dependent on the age of their children, 19 or 24 if the children are attending post-secondary. A few expect residents to attend weekly meetings and one requires participation in a 20 hour per week program. Eligibility varies considerably for these providers: one is referrals from MCFD, housing first requires a minimum of 3 months of homelessness (PCRS has 10 foster beds, 10 LGBTQ beds and 10 First Nations beds and the Annex is for homeless LGBTQ youth), one is the same as BC Housing and the other is for single mothers with income under sixty thousand per year. Some tenants leave because they age out or are ready to transition while others are asked to leave for drug and alcohol use, criminal activity or mental health concerns. Most offer support through outreach workers and housing workers, some provide one meal per day and six offer life skills and connect tenants to community services. Two create transition plans as part of their exit process while one gives the standard 30-day notice. Two offer informal follow up while one has none. One provider did not answer the last three questions.

SHELTERS AND SAFE HOUSES

This category consists of one shelter and three safe houses. Four interviews were completed with: Covenant House’s Crisis program, FRAFCA’s indigenous youth urgent needs program, Family Services of Greater Vancouver’s Directions Youth Safe House and UNYA’s Aboriginal Youth Safe House. **This category has a total of 81 beds (we are missing the capacity of one safe house). At the time of interview three were at full capacity and there were two female spaces available. Two providers do not keep a waiting list and there were a total of nine people on the wait list for the other two.** Key themes for this category are:

- Participants must work on goals towards independence and participate in life skills
- Housing or transition workers available for support
- Most are at full capacity
- All have voluntary follow ups

Maximum stays vary extensively in this category as well. Several have no maximum length as long as youth are working towards their goals up to their 25th birthday. One has a 6 month re-evaluation and the other’s maximum stay is technically seven days but they extend as long as youth are working towards their goals. To be eligible for the shelter one must be homeless and unemployed. Other eligibility include ages 16 to 24, Vancouver resident with care experience or have no
other safe place to go. Youth mostly leave when they are ready or they leave without notice. Exit processes are informal as are follow ups.

**OTHER**

Other types of housing options available to youth aging out of care include foster care or family caregiver models, community housing, treatment facilities, group homes and affordable housing. Interviewed in this category are: Plea’s U-Turn, Cheshire Home Society of BC’s Dunbar Apartments, The Bloom Group’s The View and UNYA’s Young Bear Lodge and Raven Song. Three expect attendance in life skills training or programs. This category has a total of 46 beds available. At the time of the interview there were five spots available and twenty one on wait lists. These providers share the following key themes:

- Every youth or young adult served receives one-on-one support
- Most run at full capacity
- Participants have transition plans and supports when they leave the programs
- 2 have substance use rehabilitation programs

Maximum stays vary from four to five months up to no maximum. Two programs serve up to the 19th birthday and one has a two year maximum stay. Most of these providers receive Ministry or Delegated Agency referrals with two serving Aboriginal youth and one serving individuals with physical disabilities or brain injuries. Youth housed with these providers have one on one workers and receive support to connect to community services as well as access to advocacy. Youth leave because they age out or transition to independent living, the service is not a good fit for them or they return to family. Exit processes include discharge plans, transition plans, connections to community and connections to transition and housing workers. Three offer up to six months of follow up.

The table below summarizes the housing available to youth in care and young adults transitioning from government care at the time of the research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Category</th>
<th>Total beds</th>
<th>Current vacancies</th>
<th>Current Waitlist</th>
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<tr>
<td>Non-profit and social housing</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>103</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supportive housing</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3,512 *</td>
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<td>Transitional housing</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelters and safe houses</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (community housing, treatment, group homes)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total inventory at time of research</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3,664 *</td>
</tr>
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* includes all of BC Housing’s Vancouver waitlist
This map was developed by the City of Vancouver in support of this project. A few housing providers outside of Vancouver are included in this research as they are members of CI TRRUST and have outreach in Vancouver.
Youth Survey

The youth survey included multiple choice and open-ended questions about youths’ experiences finding and maintaining housing in Vancouver.

A total of 31 youth completed the survey: twelve identified as males and sixteen as females. In total, 42% identified as Aboriginal and 90% lived in Vancouver. Fifty nine percent had previously been in government care and 28% were currently in care. Their age groupings are as follows:

- 16 to 18 = 13
- 19 to 21 = 7
- 22 to 25+ = 11

The following charts illustrate the respondents’ experience with care statuses and types of places they have lived in. Youth could mark all answers that applied to them.

*Note: 9 respondents did not answer these two questions – n=22)*

![Care status chart]

Note: Youth could mark all that apply

It appears close to two thirds of the respondents who answered this question have lived in foster care and/or been on a Youth Agreement.

![Types of care placements chart]

Note: Youth could mark all that apply
HOUSING TYPES

The survey asked participants to identify their experience with a number of housing options. All youth had experienced some kind of precarious housing in their lifetimes.

**Physical Permanency**

The survey asked youth about the number of moves they made in the past year and how long they had been at their current housing. Five individuals did not answer this question (n=26). Fifty percent of youth who answered the question had been in their current housing for less than three months, and 20% had been at their current place for over a year. Fifty-six percent had moved at least twice in the past year.

**BARRIERS TO FINDING HOUSING**

Youth were asked to identify all the barriers they faced when finding housing. Seventeen options were provided in addition to the other category. There were no differences in challenges finding housing based on gender. Forty percent of youth who answered the survey had not aged out so did not answer this question. The majority of the youth (92%) indicated housing was not safe for LGBTQ2S and 60% specified a lack of support.

Older youth (aged 19 and above) were more likely than younger youth (aged 18 and under) to report lack of supports, mental health challenges and being on social assistance as barriers to finding housing. The majority of older youth verses the minority of younger youth were more likely to identify discrimination because of their age and the shortage of safe and affordable housing. Forty-three percent of older youth reported discrimination, mental health or addiction as a barrier and, 36% how they look was a barrier to finding housing. These were not identified as barriers by any younger youth.

Youth who had stayed in group homes and detention centres were more likely to report experiencing discrimination, substance use and mental health challenges as barriers to find housing, in comparison to youth with other care experiences. Having no phone was also a barrier for these youth, as it was for youth in respite homes.

The chart below presents the top ten barriers to finding housing identified by the survey respondents.
In alignment with the youth survey results, the 2017 homeless count reports the “three most cited reasons given as a barrier to finding housing for those who were experiencing homelessness were the high cost of rent (50%) and a lack of income (49%). Thirty percent (30%) of the total homeless population selected a new option added this year, “No housing available that suits my needs” as a main barrier to housing.”

**BARRIERS TO KEEPING HOUSING**

Three out of four youth reported they had trouble keeping housing. Age discrimination was mentioned by 42% of the youth (n=26). One third left because the space was not safe.

Youth aged 18 and under were more likely to report having no trouble keeping housing while older youth were more likely to report discrimination because of age as a barrier to keeping housing. Nearly half of older youth reported having a hard time with day-to-day life skills and substance use challenges (46%). Only 25% of youth had no trouble keeping their housing.

Communication problems with the landlord and not being able to afford rent, were more common among youth on: temporary custody orders, continuing care orders, youth agreements, group homes, and respite homes. Youth who had been in a group home were 40% more likely to have trouble keeping housing. One in four youth who transition to market housing couldn’t afford the rent. Youth who had lived on the street were more likely to identify various forms of discrimination as a barrier to keeping housing.

The chart below presents the **top six reasons youth reported for not keeping housing.**
HELPFUL RESOURCES

Only one third of youth surveyed responded to the question about having help to secure housing when they aged out (n=12). The majority reported having no help.

Youth were asked what would be helpful to secure housing after transition. More youth responded this question (n=25). Seventy six percent wanted an adult to help them find somewhere to live, safe and affordable housing and knowing their rights as tenants. The next most common response was an understanding landlord followed closely by a stable job. Half the youth identified access to a phone, access to technology, rental subsidies and adults to co-sign leases.

Youth who had been on Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) are less likely than youth in group homes and in respite care to want an adult to help them find housing.

CULTURAL SAFE SPACE

In an open-ended question, youth were asked what a cultural safe space would look like. There were thirteen responses. A couple mentioned particular Aboriginal cultural practices such as smudging and potlachs. A few mentioned places where every culture is embraced, less discrimination, no racism, and where people can express themselves fully without being judged.

IDEAL HOUSING

Youth were asked, through an open-ended question, what would be their ideal housing. Twenty-three youth responded to the question. Sixty-one percent of youth mentioned proximity to public transit and sky train making it the most common response. An apartment was the next most common response at 48%. Apartments had to be clean and safe, have friendly
landlords, affordable rents and be big enough to have friends over. The next theme was having stores close by. A few youth mentioned pet friendly spaces and supports.

“More safe and affordable housing. Higher shelter support rent money from assistance. Not just $375 towards your rent.”

Youth survey respondent

“I think there needs to be more Lgtbq2sia+ based questions. The wording was excellent I like whoever created it. Also it sucks so much I can’t get a youth agreement and I’ll most likely be homeless before I get one. That’s messed up yo. “

Youth respondent to survey
Housing Models and Strategies

Various housing models and strategies were reviewed. Most of the information was retrieved from websites and a few phone calls to clarify or gain a better understanding of the services. Evaluation data was reviewed where available. The models and strategies are grouped in four categories.

- Organizational capacity and systems
- Transitional and supportive housing models
- Subsidy models
- Other housing models

**ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND SYSTEMS**

These strategies focus on systems change, strengthening organizational capacity, informative research, and providing resources.

*Foster care system:*

**The Mockingbird Society**

Historically known for providing a voice for youth in foster care, the Mockingbird Society launched a family constellation housing model in 2004, the Mockingbird Family Model (MFM). The model creates a support network around families with the goal of keeping families together and reducing the number of children entering the foster care system. MFM has a special focus on issues of permanency – including early reunification, adoption and preparing youth for a healthy transition to adulthood. Their innovative model intentionally creates community. Every constellation has six to ten families who live in close proximity to a licensed foster care family. The family home becomes a hub to assist other families to navigate bureaucratic systems, offers peer support, social activities and respite care. The model offers a unique and grassroots dimension to the foster care system and the ministry’s goal of keeping children with their families.

**Organizational capacity:**

*Foster Youth Housing Initiative*

A US strategy which ran from 2006 to 2008 with $2.125 million in funding, Foster Youth Housing (FYH) aimed to help former foster youth obtain permanent housing through direct services, building housing capacity and systems change. Of the total funding, $1.5 million was given to six youth serving organizations for the provision of direct services to youth in and from foster care; another $350,000 was invested in training housing developers to better serve youth and to help county decision makers implement transitional housing plans and education. Evaluation data showed 21 housing units were built with another 99-112 in the planning process. The report also noted 535 youth remained in stable housing, 586 youth were served, 69% of youth were enrolled in post-secondary school and 68% were employed in full or part time jobs.

*More Than a Roof, Halton, Ontario*

More than a Roof identified key characteristics of successful housing projects. They recognize five common elements in successful case studies:

- Location is available, accessible and safe
- Youth involvement, ownership and choice
- Holistic approach
• Development of community partners, relationships between community and people
• Report suggested a combination of shelter provision and ongoing support (in transitional housing) for life skills development.

The project must be centred on youth and their needs and youth must demonstrate a desire to do something about their situation. Methods for reaching young people must be in place at all levels to carry them from one stage of housing to their next steps. A sliding lease makes it possible for youth to have permanent housing right away and seems to be a successful formula. The sliding lease means youth pay what they can when they enter the housing and the rent increases based on their income. They conclude their research with a made in Halton transitional housing plan with goals, objectives and values.

A Way Home, Canada

A Way Home is a national coalition dedicated to preventing, reducing and ending youth homelessness in Canada. “Through a ‘collective impact’ framework we inspire and enable communities and all levels of government to organize, plan and implement strategies to address youth homelessness in a coordinated, measurable and impactful way. By strengthening families and building the assets and resilience of youth, we can help young people avoid homelessness and make a healthy transition to adulthood.” A Way Home is an active collaboration between a range of national partners, all of whom bring expertise, resources, national profile and members to support the work of the coalition. Guided by a small and focused secretariat, coalition partners work together to support communities in planning and implementing solutions and engage government and the general public in supporting their vision to prevent and end youth homelessness in Canada. A Way Home helps local communities plan, implement and sustain effective, evidence-based and measurable strategies. This organization’s website is a repository for effective program models and innovations.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING MODELS

Transitional housing provides an immediate step between an emergency crisis shelter and permanent housing. The Transitional Housing Models in Canada report highlights three types of homeless resettlement strategies, all of which have had mixed outcomes. The three types are:

• Normalization, which moves people directly into market housing
• Tiered, this provides one or more stages before moving to market housing
• Staircase of transition, a series of stages, with sanctions in progress toward market housing

The report supports the theory that communities with very low vacancy rates and low levels of affordable housing experience an “increased reliance on transitional housing” (Transitional Housing Models in Canada). This section introduces transitional and supportive housing models.

Foyer Federation, UK

Established in 1992 and located in the UK, the Foyer Federation provides transitional housing for youth aged 16 to 25 with a maximum stay of two years. They average between 20 and 50 beds in buildings with some scattered sites. Youth must sign formal agreements about the use of resources upon entering the program. The program includes affordable accommodations, training, guidance, personal development and job search facilities. Participating youth are able to experience greater independence by living alone or in small groups, while still having access to necessary supports. Tenants are not fully responsible for their leases or required to earn sufficient income to live in these more independent settings. Foyer enables young people to reconnect with learning, increase their employability, improve their health and
wellbeing and develop their leadership potential. They are known for innovative partnerships with the business world for opening different kinds of conversations between young people and the world of work.

**Good Shepherd Society, Chelsea Foyer, New York City**

The Chelsea Foyer provides supportive housing to young adults in their late teens and early twenties who have aged out of the child welfare system, are homeless, or at risk of homelessness. Chelsea is an adaptation of the UK Foyer model to meet the needs of young people in New York. Youth are encouraged to begin securing stable housing immediately upon intake. All available options for housing and the practicalities of independent living are discussed in detail. Ninety percent of participants transition to market housing before their two-year stay is up. Foyer residents are taught and encouraged to become completely self-sufficient. Residents must attend four on-site life skills workshops each month. These meetings are facilitated by alumni who have transitioned. Independent living counsellors and case managers meet with youth twice a month and are on site 24/7. They provide access to opportunities that help youth successfully navigate the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

**Eva's Initiatives, Toronto, Ontario**

Eva's Initiatives offers emergency and transitional housing for youth aged 16 to 24. They have 123 scattered units throughout Toronto. They offer three types of housing services:

1. Eva’s Place – a 40 bed emergency shelter for homeless youth 16 – 24 provides support for the return home or the transition to community
2. Eva’s Satellite – a 30 bed harm reduction youth shelter, the first of its kind in Canada
3. Eva’s Phoenix –transitional housing for up to 50 young people 16 – 24 experiencing homelessness. Ten townhouse style units with teaching kitchens and access to various health, life skills, employability, and housing supports. Offers up to one year of services

The greatest challenge for Eva’s is access to sufficient funding at an average cost of $2,858 per month per youth. Their 2016 annual report lists:

- 1034 youth served ages 16-24
- 84 youth supported to complete high school or go on to post-secondary
- 382 youth and families served by the family reconnect program
- 1,193 served in harm reduction

**A Way Home, Kamloops, BC**

In 2014, the concern for the growing youth homelessness population led to the development of Kamloops strategic framework to end youth homelessness. A recent report of outcomes in the Tyee states that as a result of streamlined services, 92 youth were provided housing and another six were reconnected with their families. In 18 months, A Way Home has created 15 more youth specific beds. The non-profit beds are transitional and meant to help bridge the gap between shelters and permanent housing. They are engaging businesses to provide housing suite subsidies for youth in transition.

**Lighthouse Youth Services, Cincinnati, Ohio**

Lighthouse offers transitional and supportive housing for youth with disabilities, mental health challenges and addictions, including parenting youth and their children. They operate three programs: Independent Living Program, Transitional
Living Program and Shelter Care Plus. They have arrangements with up to 40 landlords and rental companies to provide scattered site apartments for youth aged 19 to 22. Although the scattered sites have been successful, supporting the youth is labour intensive and staff must continually seek apartments. Low vacancy rates will drastically impact this model.

**Triangle Tribe Apartments, New York**

Provides transitional housing for LGBTQ2S and homeless youth through Green Chimneys Children’s Services. They offer life skills, scattered site programs, peer-to-peer mentoring and aftercare support, offering housing to homeless youth age 17-21 for up to 18 months. They also have a four-bed emergency shelter attached to their basic centre. Transition planning starts early with staff assisting youth to find and save for suitable accommodations when they leave. Often the young people will move to a shared living situation or rent a room, since apartments in the city are very expensive.

**Supportive Housing Young Mothers, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia**

The supportive housing model for young mothers housed in a former elementary school offering family support, child minding staff, program staff and live in staff 24/7. In addition to housing, SHYM provides individualized outreach programs that focus on the child, being a parent and self-care.

**Pape Adolescent Resource Centre, Toronto, Ontario**

Pape is a supportive housing program providing preparation for independence for youth aged 15-24. PARC is a partnership of 3 child protection services, the Children’s Aid Society of Toronto, the Catholic Children’s Aid and the Jewish Family and Child Services. They have developed a partnership with housing and services providers. PARC offers rent geared to income housing in partnership with the city and with 2 non-profit housing providers. PARC does not evict based on age. Their main challenge is a lack of funding and the unwillingness of housing providers to rent to youth and especially youth in care.

**SUBSIDY MODELS**

**Connected by 25 – Family Unification Program, US**

The Child Welfare Information Gateway led to the Youth Transitions from Government’s Connected by 25 report. The report outlines five strategies to connect foster youth to resources that would prepare them for economic success in life. They learned that older youth need stable, safe and affordable housing in order to maintain steady employment, pursue higher education and access health care. The federal government provided additional housing resources through the Family Unification Program (FUP) which provides vouchers for use on housing for up to 18 months. To date, more than 500 young people have received housing and avoided homelessness. The following are Connected by 25’s five strategies to provide housing support for youth aging out of care:

- Access federal housing resources
- Tap child welfare resources
- Access community development resources
- Create public-private partnerships
- Improve coordination across systems

**Supporting our Youth, Toronto, Ontario**

Supporting our Youth (SOY) is a community development project designed to improve the lives of LGBTQ2S youth. Program staff work to create healthy arts, culture and recreational spaces for young people; provide supportive housing and employment opportunities; and increase youth access to adult mentoring and support.
SOY enters into agreements with non-profit and co-operative housing providers to secure subsidized housing for their clients. They have 15 units with different providers in several buildings. All the units are self-contained bachelor and one-bedroom units. The housing providers agree to make a certain number of units available to SOY. In return, SOY agrees to ensure that their clients have access to whatever support is necessary to make their housing tenure a success.

The Bill Wilson Center, Santa Clara, California

The center offers a broad range of housing and services focused on homelessness and at-risk youth. The Transitional Housing Placement Program (THP-P) is for youth aged 16 and older who are in foster care until the age of 18 or 19 and still in school. Then the Transitional Housing Program (THP) for youth who have aged out of foster care or homeless youth. Youth who do not need added support are housed immediately in one of the scattered site apartments. Bill Wilson offers a two-year rental subsidy of $500 per month as long as the youth is attending school and stays connected to their case managers.

These THP programs are offered throughout the state of California. The program partners with county agencies, community-based organizations, foundations, and private businesses to provide host-family, scattered-site, and single-site housing. Participants receive a wide range of supportive services and must fulfill several requirements, including full-time or part-time employment, combined with school or training; work with a life coach and housing specialist; participation in case planning; saving 50 percent of their net earnings; and submitting receipts for food, clothing, and recreational expenditures. Participants are eligible for post program housing assistance but must agree to maintain contact with the program for at least two years after exit.

OTHER HOUSING MODELS

BC Tiny House Collective

Founded in 2016, this collective focuses on engagement, research and creating pilot projects for tiny houses to help increase housing stock. They believe tiny houses are a viable alternate model suitable for seniors, students, lone parents and small families. They recently created a documentary film looking at housing regulations and exploring housing in a local context.

Housing First. National Initiative

There are a number of housing first sites in the Greater Vancouver area. The national program focuses on quickly moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing. Housing First offers three types of support:

1. Housing clients and helping them maintain the placement
2. Clinical supports: Providing or facilitating access to health and social care to clients to help them achieve housing stability and encourage well-being
3. Complementary Supports such as assistance with finding employment, volunteer work as well as accessing training offered on a case-to-case basis to help clients improve their quality of life

Richter Street Youth Shelter, Kelowna, BC

Richter is an emergency shelter for youth ages 13-18 operated by the Okanagan Boys and Girls Club. They accept youth who are under the influence of drugs or alcohol as long as the youth presents no risk to themselves or others. Richter’s is designed to “get kids in the door” after which there is an opportunity to engage them in services. The shelter provides basic services such as food, clothing, and a place to shower, do laundry and sleep. Staff also help youth connect to other community resources and take the next step to move forward with their lives.
Chrysalis House, Youth in Transition, Fredericton, New Brunswick

Chrysalis House is a place where personal safety and accessibility to employment, education, and health care are met within a nurturing family-like setting. Chrysalis House models a stable home setting where each individual is treated with dignity and respect. Youth in Transition is currently attempting to reach some of New Brunswick’s street entrenched youth with care experience.
Focus Groups

Three focus groups were facilitated at Aunt Leah’s in New Westminster, Covenant House in Vancouver and with the TRRUST Collective Young Leaders in Vancouver with a total of 23 participants. Each focus group was facilitated by a youth researcher or the project manager. Focus groups started with an overview of the research and asked youth about their experiences with housing and the barriers to finding and keeping housing. Youth worked together to create a 'helpful resources' wish list. The sessions concluded with a presentation of ten housing models and the participants developed their own housing models.

Participants in the focus groups agreed with the youth survey’s top 10 barriers to finding housing and added the following:

- Finances: no money for damage deposits, no credit or fail at credit checks, unaffordable
- Supportive housing eligibility and requirements at times make it impossible to keep living there
- No references, too much competition, parole requirements and not pet friendly

Participants in the focus groups agreed with the youth survey’s top six reasons for not keeping housing and added the following:

- Too many friends dropped in, doing silly and stupid things, too noisy, fighting with roommate
- Loss of friend and / or roommates in a shared home arrangement
- Lack of knowledge of tenancy rights
- Moldy, unclean and unsafe places like illegal suites

The focus groups participants compiled a wish list for helpful resources in finding and keeping housing.

- Make an overall ask for landlords to rent to youth and young adults – enhance Friendly Landlord Network
- Housing specific worker/ navigator for each youth transitioning out of care – part of an outreach team – co-signers of leases and some resource money for damage deposits and subsidies
- Peers who have successfully transitioned to independent living as coaches / alumni engagement
- More affordable rent
- Pet friendly housing

Lastly, ten housing models were presented and the participants encouraged to develop their own preferred models. Several themes emerged:

- Support: supportive housing, adult check in, house staff – housing navigator, mental health support, rent payment supervision and money management, peer support – peers working as coaches at the supportive and transition housing, sense of family and community
- Scattered units seemed to be the preferred option
- Continuum of housing: low barrier, subsidies sponsored by businesses, sliding scale leases, transition housing with ABCs of independent living and learning rights as tenants – understanding leases and contracts, help with landlord communication
- Eva’s model was a favourite – especially Satellite and Phoenix portions of the model, and the idea of a continuum of housing from shelter to independent living in one organization – considered seamless and easy to navigate
Youth also liked the idea of signing off on the cost of their transitional housing and supports monthly to create awareness of what it costs to live and increase accountability and awareness of all stakeholders.

The strong peer support element mirrors the consultations with youth in Halton for the More Than a Roof research. Youth desired support staff that they could identify with and who had lived experience. The scattered housing sites had more appeal than that of the shared accommodations, although, Eva’s Phoenix and a live-in alumni support worker were also popular model components. Universal to all focus groups is the idea of the one-on-one support for housing – a navigator or housing worker in addition to the current transition workers.
Economic Realities

Included in this section are the vacancy rates and the average rental rates for a bachelor in Vancouver. Potential sources of income for youth aging out of care are determined with a focus on shelter maximums. Income is matched with rental rates to demonstrate shortfalls. Survey and focus groups’ identified barriers add to the complex realities faced by young people’s transitions into adulthood.

Potential Sources of Income

*Income Assistance* – when youth are in need and have no other resources, they may be eligible for income assistance to help support their transition to employment. The shelter maximum for a single person on assistance is $375 per month. A recent increase in September 2017 brings the monthly total available on Income Assistance to $710. ([http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/policies-for-government/bcea-policy-and-procedure-manual/bc-employment-and-assistance-rate-tables/income-assistance-rate-table](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/policies-for-government/bcea-policy-and-procedure-manual/bc-employment-and-assistance-rate-tables/income-assistance-rate-table) - Income assistance rates table and information)

*Persons with Disability* – assistance and supplements to provide greater independence for people with disabilities. Shelter maximum remains $375 per month. The maximum monthly payment is up to $1,133 and depends on the disability. ([http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/policies-for-government/bcea-policy-and-procedure-manual/bc-employment-and-assistance-rate-tables/disability-assistance-rate-table](http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/policies-for-government/bcea-policy-and-procedure-manual/bc-employment-and-assistance-rate-tables/disability-assistance-rate-table) - Income Assistance rates table and information)

*Agreements with Young Adults* – for youth aged 19-26 transitioning into an approved program and / or post-secondary education. Support for up to 48 months or four years. Average rent portion varies from $500 to $700 per month. Individuals must have been on a Continuing Custody Order or Youth Agreement.

*Youth Education Assistance Fund* – is available for youth on a Continuing Custody Order, aged 19 to 24, and provides up to four grants of $5,500 per year. Youth must also be registered in an approved program and / or post-secondary education. Total grant $5,500 annually, just shy of $460 per month.

*Full time employment* – minimum wage of $11.35 per hour at 35 hours per week for a total monthly gross pay of $1,589.

Rental rates


BC Housing sets income limits by cities; to afford housing in Vancouver a youth must have an annual income of $40,000 for a bachelor suite, and $45,000 for a one bedroom ([file:///C:/Users/Collective%20Impact/Downloads/2017-Housing-Income-Limits-HILs.0.pdf – BC housing, Housing income limits table]. “Housing Income Limits represent the income required to pay the average market rent for an appropriately sized unit in the private market. Average rents are derived from CMHC’s annual Rental Market Survey. The size of unit required by a household is governed by federal/provincial occupancy standards.” There exist other sites that provide comparable data.

Vancity published a report titled *Rent Race, the growing unaffordability of rent in Metro Vancouver* ([file:///C:/Users/Collective%20Impact/Downloads/entrcrrental-reporto6282016-160704223047.pdf](file:///C:/Users/Collective%20Impact/Downloads/entrcrrental-reporto6282016-160704223047.pdf)). Renters represent one third of households in Vancouver and 33% are aged 15 to 34. Between 2011 and 2015, rents increased 11.4% compared to a 6.6% increase in median wages between 2011 and 2015.
The chart below illustrates the monthly income by source noting the shortfalls with a bachelor at $1,060 per month. The stick figures represent how many young adults it would take to make one monthly rent payment.

A bachelor in Vancouver averages 500 square feet and costs $1,060 per month (CMHC, 2017). It would take a minimum of three youth aging out of care to make rent every month if they were on income assistance; two young people if they were on Agreements with Young Adults. Based on minimum wage, one young adult would be expending 73% of their gross monthly income on rent. In 2017 the Vancouver Sun reported $1,875 rent will get you 610 square feet (Vancouver Sun, September 21, 2017).

In its annual poverty report, First Call BC makes several references to youth aging out of care. “Youth are aging out of foster care into deep poverty and disconnection, and a disproportionate number of them are Indigenous. Growing income inequality and systemic discrimination based on gender, cultural identity, disability, age and other social status markers frame this picture” (Poverty Report Card 2017). They cite A Way Home study in Kamloops that identified the difficult transition experienced by youth leaving government care as one of the key systemic failures leading youth to homelessness (A Way Home: a plan to end youth homelessness in Kamloops, 2013). In their Working for a Living Wage report, 2017 update, First Call BC in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives establish $20.62 as the living wage for Vancouver (p.5). That is a far cry from the current minimum wage of $11.35.

One of the recommendations in the Aboriginal Homelessness count report is to ‘reduce youth homelessness by implementing an After Care Guarantee, so that when young people are taken into care, government commits to providing ongoing support (as needed) until a young person reaches the age of 25’ (Vancouver, 2017). This is supported by literature that suggests that youth in care need to have the same gradual and extended transition to adulthood that most young people enjoy.

The March 2017 homelessness count asked about Ministry experience for the first time. Nineteen to twenty four year olds experiencing homelessness were most likely to have been in Ministry care, with 38% of this group responding that they had been or were currently in Ministry care.

Vacancy rates

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s 2017 rental market report for BC states the rental market for Vancouver remains very tight with a vacancy rate for apartments at 0.9%. The competitiveness created by such a low vacancy rate
Surviving or Thriving?

augments the difficulties faced by young adults transitioning from care when seeking housing. Rental units tend to be off the market within a few hours of being listed, and are more likely to be leased to mature adults.

Recommendations

Potential strategies to reduce the risk that youth transitioning out of care in Vancouver will end up homeless include:

1. Increase awareness and build collective will to increase and provide housing for all youth aging out of care in Vancouver:
   a. Distribute a minimum of 100 copies of this report
   b. Housing Cluster and Youth Researchers develop workshop and presentations
   c. TRRUST to seek opportunities to share information and set up presentations and workshops
   d. Meet with key stakeholders: BC Housing, BCNPHA, City of Vancouver and provincial ministries

2. Increase support for youth aging out of care in Vancouver with a housing navigator:
   a. TRRUST will advocate for funding for at least one housing navigator in Vancouver to support the approximately 110 youth transitioning out of care and connect them to housing prior to their 19th birthday
   b. Housing cluster to develop a job description for the housing navigator position including the following key deliverables:
      i. Increase number of landlords willing to rent to youth aging out of care – working with the Friendly Landlord Network
      ii. Work with public post-secondary institutions to increase housing support for youth aging out with AYAs attending their institutions
      iii. Develop a protocol with MCFD for all youth aging out to be connected to housing navigator
      iv. Provide opportunities for all youth aging out to attend a Ready to Rent workshop
      v. Engage alumni – peers to support a healthy transition to independent housing

3. Increase availability of subsidies for all youth aging out of care:
   a. Develop a plan and strategies to approach businesses to support youth aging out by providing financial subsidies for 1 to 3 years
   b. Write proposals for funding for housing subsidies – develop a financial plan that will demonstrate the need for subsidy funding
   c. Advocate to provincial and federal government for an increase in the total number of subsidies available in Vancouver
4. Engage developers and builders:
   a. Create opportunities to meet with developers and builders so they can hear from youth transitioning out of care about the difficulties in finding housing
   b. Co-create an action plan and solutions
   c. Seek to build partnerships and agreements to increase the total number of affordable housing units dedicated to young adults
   d. Explore the potential for Tiny Houses working with the BC Tiny House Collective

5. Develop a Vancouver transitional housing model using the example of Halton’s More Than a Roof initiative:
   a. Gather youth and young adults for a half day to create a model that responds to their feedback
   b. Engage service providers to brainstorm

In collaboration with our partners in TRRUST collective impact, the Housing Cluster will develop an overall action plan to support youth transitioning to independent living in Vancouver.
Appendix A - Housing Provider Interview

1. What is the name of your organization?
2. What is the name of your program?
3. What is the address for your program?
4. What type of housing services do you provide? (If option is provided, please check circle)
   - Safe house
   - Shelter
   - Transitional Housing
   - Supportive Housing
   - Non-for profit/Social Housing
   - Other: ________________________________________________
5. What ages do you serve?
   - 17 and under
   - 18 – 24
   - 25 and older
   - Other: ________________________________________________
6. What are the eligibility criteria to get into the program?
7. What services does your organization provide on-site that supports youth housing?
8. What are the expectations of youth when in your program? (behaviour/participation)
   - Are youth required to:
     - volunteer
     - attend a life skills program/ class
     - create a transition plan
     - attend meetings with housing provider staff and supports
     - participation in substance use rehabilitation program
     - participate in mental health program
     - sign participation agreements
     - other, please explain:
9. Upon intake to your program are you provided with orientation as to program expectations and supports available?
   - Written: YES or NO
   - Verbal: YES or NO
10. What is your programs full capacity?
11. Do you currently have a waitlist? YES or NO
12. If yes, how long is your waitlist?
13. As of today, are you at full capacity? YES or NO
14. If no, how many spots do you have open?
15. What are your busiest times (months?) throughout the year?
16. Are there any noticeable intake patterns throughout the year? (please specify)
   A. Are there any months or seasons of the year in which there is an increase in youth entering the program?
   B. Are there any months or seasons of the year in which there is a decrease in youth entering the program?
C. Are there any specific demographics of youth who are more likely to access your program? (Age, gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ2S, etc.)?

15. Is there a certain length of time youth can access your program? YES or NO
   • What is the maximum length of time?

16. Do you allocate beds for any of the following.....

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPTIONS</th>
<th>YES or NO</th>
<th>Number of beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Youth</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LGBTQ2S and/or gender variant youth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth on income assistance</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

17. Do youth have access to private washrooms? YES or NO
   • Are washrooms shared/co-ed? YES or NO

18. Do youth have access to laundry services? YES or NO

19. Do you allow youth with children? YES or NO
   • If yes, how many children per youth:
   • What are the ages allowed (EXAMPLE: birth to 4 years old):

20. Do you allow pets? YES or NO?
   • If yes, are there restrictions?
   • E.g. Small pets? (Cats, reptiles, birds, small dogs, etc.):
   • E.g. Large pets? (Large dogs, large reptiles, etc.):

21. Do you allow spouses/partners/couples? YES or NO
   • If yes, what are the restrictions?

22. Are there consequences if program expectations are not met? YES or NO
   • If yes, please explain:

23. Is there any tolerance or process if program expectations are not met? YES or NO (Substance use, curfews, visitors/guests allowed, etc.)
   • If yes, please explain:

24. Does your program have a policy for return if youth are asked to leave? YES or NO
   • If yes please explain:

25. Do youth have to pay rent? YES or NO

26. Do you offer Subsidies Yes Or No - If No, proceed to #33
   If Yes to A to L, Please answer subsidies Questions below:
A. What is the availability for subsidies?
B. Is there a waitlist to access the subsidy? How long?
C. What amounts might a youth be eligible for? ($$$/per month)
D. What are the eligibility requirements for the subsidy?
E. What are your expectations of youth while receiving a subsidy?
F. What is the length of time a youth can receive a subsidy for?
G. Does your organization provide any subsidies for youth to access market housing?
H. What is the source of this rental subsidy?
   o BC Housing – Homeless Prevention Program
   o SIL – Supported Independent Living – subsidy for individual with mental illness
   o Community Living BC
   o Other:
I. In addition to rental subsidies, do you provide any additional financial supports related to housing to youth accessing market housing?
   o Start-up kit?
   o Damage deposit?
   o Emergency amount (1 month’s rent? Etc.)
   o Moving costs
   o Other:
J. What is the source of this funding?
   o Housing First? Other:
K. What number of youth can you support with these additional supports at any given time?
L. Is there a waitlist to access? How long?

33. What are the reasons young people are leaving?
34. Do you have a formal exit process?
   • If yes, what is the exit process?
35. Are there follow ups with the youth after they leave the program? YES or NO
   • Are follow ups with youth formal policy? YES or NO
   • Are follow ups with youth informal and/or on a voluntary basis? YES or NO
36. What do you think the barriers are for youth transitioning into market housing?
   Do you have any concluding thoughts or questions?
Appendix B - Youth Survey

TRRUST Collective Impact Youth Housing Survey
We're interested in the experiences and thoughts of youth (ages 16-25) in and from care regarding housing in Vancouver. Your feedback will help us better understand what is needed to help youth find and keep housing after they transition out of care.

Confidential and anonymous. Please don't put your name on this survey. Nobody will be able to connect your answers to you personally.

Voluntary. You can choose to not take part, stop at any time, and to skip questions you don't feel comfortable answering.

Chance to win a $25 gift card.
Once you complete & submit your survey, you can choose to enter your name in a draw to win one of six $25 gift cards (of your choice). If you choose to enter the draw, we still won't be able to link your name to your survey answers -- your survey will remain anonymous.

TRRUST Collective Impact.
TRRUST has over 100 members from 40 organizations that want to ensure youth transitioning from care in Vancouver thrive. Housing has been identified as a priority and we need to hear about your experiences.

1. How old are you?
   - 15 or younger
   - 16 years old
   - 17 years old
   - 18 years old
   - 19 years old
   - 20 years old
   - 21 years old
   - 22 years old
   - 23 years old
   - 24 years old
   - 25 or older

2. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female
   - Transgender
   - (Please specify) ___________________

3. People have different descriptions about themselves when it comes to being attracted to other people. Which of the following best describes your feelings?
   - Straight (attracted to people of the opposite sex)
   - Bisexual (pansexual; attracted to both males and females)
   - Gay/Lesbian (attracted to people of the same sex)
   - Questioning (I'm questioning who I'm attracted to)
   - I don't have attractions

4. What is your background?
   - Mark all that apply
   - Aboriginal (First Nations, Métis, Inuit)
Surviving or Thriving?

- European (British, Irish, Ukrainian, Scottish, Russian, Dutch, German, Italian, etc.)
- African (Nigerian, Kenyan, Ethiopian, Tanzanian, etc.)
- East Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.)
- South Asian (East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.)
- Southeast Asian (Cambodian, Filipino, Indonesian, Vietnamese, etc.)
- West Asian (Afghani, Iranian, Arab, Kazakhstani, etc.)
- Latin American, South American, Central American
- Australian, Pacific Islander
- I don't know
- Other (please explain): ______________________________

5. Where are you living now?
   - Vancouver
   - Somewhere else in BC (please specify): ____________________________
   - Other (Please specify): __________________________________________

6. Have you spent time in care? (Foster home, group home, custody centre, etc.)
   - No
   - Yes, currently
   - Yes, but not anymore

7. Have you ever experienced any of the following?
   Mark all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes, Currently</th>
<th>Yes, In the past</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Continuing Custody Order</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Temporary Custody Order</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Voluntary Care Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Youth Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Agreement With Young Adults (AYA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Foster home</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Group home</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Respite care</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8. Have you ever stayed in or experienced each of the following?  
*Mark all that apply*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes, Currently</th>
<th>Yes, In the past</th>
<th>I don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Subsidized youth housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Transition housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Shelter or Safe house</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Market housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Mental health facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Rehab or detox centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Living on the street</td>
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<tr>
<td>h. Couch surfing</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Other, please specify:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

9. How long have you lived in your current housing situation?  
- Less than 3 months  
- 3 months to under 6 months  
- 6 months to 1 year  
- More than 1 year

10. How many times have you moved in the last year?  
- 0 times  
- Once  
- Twice  
- 3 or more times
11. If you’ve ever had trouble FINDING housing, what do you think have been the reasons? *Mark all that apply*

- Lack of support
- I had no phone number to receive calls from landlords
- I didn’t have a CV/résumé
- Discrimination because of my age
- A shortage of safe and affordable housing
- Because I was on Social Assistance
- Mental health challenges
- Substance use challenges
- History of illegal activity
- Discrimination because people thought I had mental health challenges or addictions
- Discrimination because of my race/skin colour
- Because of how I look (tattoos, piercings, etc.)
- Discrimination because of a disability
- Because of my pregnancy involvement / because I had children
- Because I had a pet
- It didn’t feel safe for LGBTQ2S youth
- I have not had trouble finding housing
- Other (please specify): ________________

12. If you’ve ever had trouble KEEPING housing, what do you think have been the reasons? *Mark all that apply*

- Lack of support
- Communication problems with the landlord
- I left because I couldn’t afford the rent
- Discrimination because of my age
- I had a hard time with day-to-day life skills (paying bills, cooking, etc.)
- My partner and I broke up
- Mental health challenges
- Substance use challenges
- Illegal activity
- Discrimination because people thought I had mental health challenges or addictions
- Discrimination because of my race/skin colour
- Because of how I look (tattoos, piercings, etc.)
- Discrimination because of a disability
- Because of my pregnancy involvement / because I had children
- Because I had a pet
- Problems with my roommate
- I left because the place was not safe
- Conflicts with neighbours/landlord
- I was evicted because of complaints by my neighbours/landlord
- I didn’t feel my cultural identity was respectful
- My LGBTQ2S identity wasn’t respected
- I have not had trouble keeping housing
- Other (please specify): ________________
13. Where did you go when you aged out of care?
- I haven’t aged out
- Market housing
- Subsidized youth housing
- Shelter
- Lived with family (parent, sibling, aunt, etc.)
- Experienced homelessness
- Couch surfed
- Other (please specify): ___________________________

14. What would be helpful for youth to secure housing after transitioning out of care?
Mark all that apply:
- An adult to help me find somewhere to live (help me locate places, view places with me, etc.)
- Access to technology to search for homes
- Having a phone to receive calls from landlords
- An adult to co-sign
- Peer support or peer mentorship
- Knowing my rights as a tenant
- Rental subsidy
- Support to manage my mental health or/and substance use challenges
- An understanding landlord
- Availability of safe and affordable housing
- A stable job
- Other (please specify): ___________________________

15. Do you participate in practices from your culture?
- Never
- Sometimes
- Often
- Not applicable

16. What does a culturally safe space look like for you?

17. How important is it for you to live somewhere you feel safe practicing your culture?
- Not at all
- A little
- Quite
- Very
- Not applicable
18. Within reason, what would be your ideal housing situation? (E.g. apartment, near a bus stop, close to stores, etc.)

19. Is there anything else you would like to share?
Appendix C - Housing Model Resources


BC Tiny House Collective, www.bctinyhousecollective.com


The Foyer, UK, launched 1992


Housing First, https://www.canada.ca


Youth in Transition, Fredericton, https://www.yitfredericton.ca
Appendix D - CI TRRUST Stakeholders

In addition to local young people with care experience and community champions, the following organisations are engaged in the TRRUST Collective Impact (January 2018):

Adoptive Families Association of BC
Aunt Leah’s Place
BC Federation of Foster Parents
BC Housing
Big Sisters
Boys and Girls Club
Broadway Youth Resources Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association Vancouver
Central City Foundation
Child and Youth Health Network, Victoria – Collective Impact
Collaborative for Child and Youth Mental Health – Local Action Team
City of Vancouver
Covenant House Vancouver
Directions Youth Services
Douglas College
Family Services Greater Vancouver
Federation of Community Social Services of BC
Federation of Youth in Care Networks
Frog Hollow – Drive Youth Employment Centre
Hollyburn Family Services
Lu’ma Native Housing Society
Milieu Family Services
Ministry of Children and Family Development
MCFD Strategic Priorities – Young Adult Services
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction
Network of Inner City Community Services Society
Pacific Coast Resource Society
PLEA Community Services
Providence Health
Public Guardian and Trustee of BC
RayCam Neighbourhood House
Realize Co-op
Spirit of the Children Society
Street to Home
Tamarack Institute
The Bloom Group
University of British Columbia
University of Victoria
Urban Native Youth Association
Vancouver Aboriginal Child & Family Services Society
Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services Society
Vancouver Coastal Health
Vancouver Foundation
Vancouver Parks and Recreation
Vancouver School Board
Watari
YWCA of Vancouver – Strive, Career Zone, Legal Advocate