Towards Integrated Solutions to Youth Homelessness

CHRA ACHRU

Canadian Housing and Renewal Association

A Home for the Housing Sector

Emily Jackson Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness (moderator)

David French A Way Home Canada

Kelly Roth Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness

Joshua Smee Choices for Youth

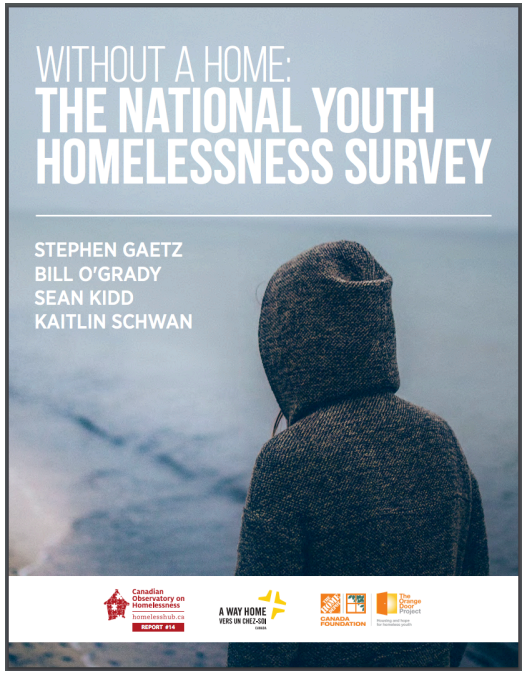
Part 1

The CONTEXT

A WAY HOME
VERS UN CHEZ-SOI
CANADA

The Evidence

Survey Results from the first Without a Home study (2016)



- **Overrepresented minorities**: LGBTQ2S – 29.5%; Indigenous 30.5%; Racialized, 28.5%
- 40.1% had **first experience of homelessness** before the age of 16.
- Homelessness **compromises health and well-being**: 85.4% had significant mental health problems, and 42% reported at least one suicide attempt
- 58% reported previous involvement with **child protection** (compared with 0.3% for housed youth)
- **NEET**: 50.5% not in employment, education or training
- **Criminal Victimization**: Exponentially more likely to be a victim of crime
- Vulnerability to **sex trafficking**

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A WAY HOME VERS UN CHEZ-SOI CANADA

Stephen Gaetz, Bill O'Grady, Sean Kidd & Kaitlin Schwan. (2016). *Without a Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

Data points to some important conclusions

First, we are waiting too long to intervene.

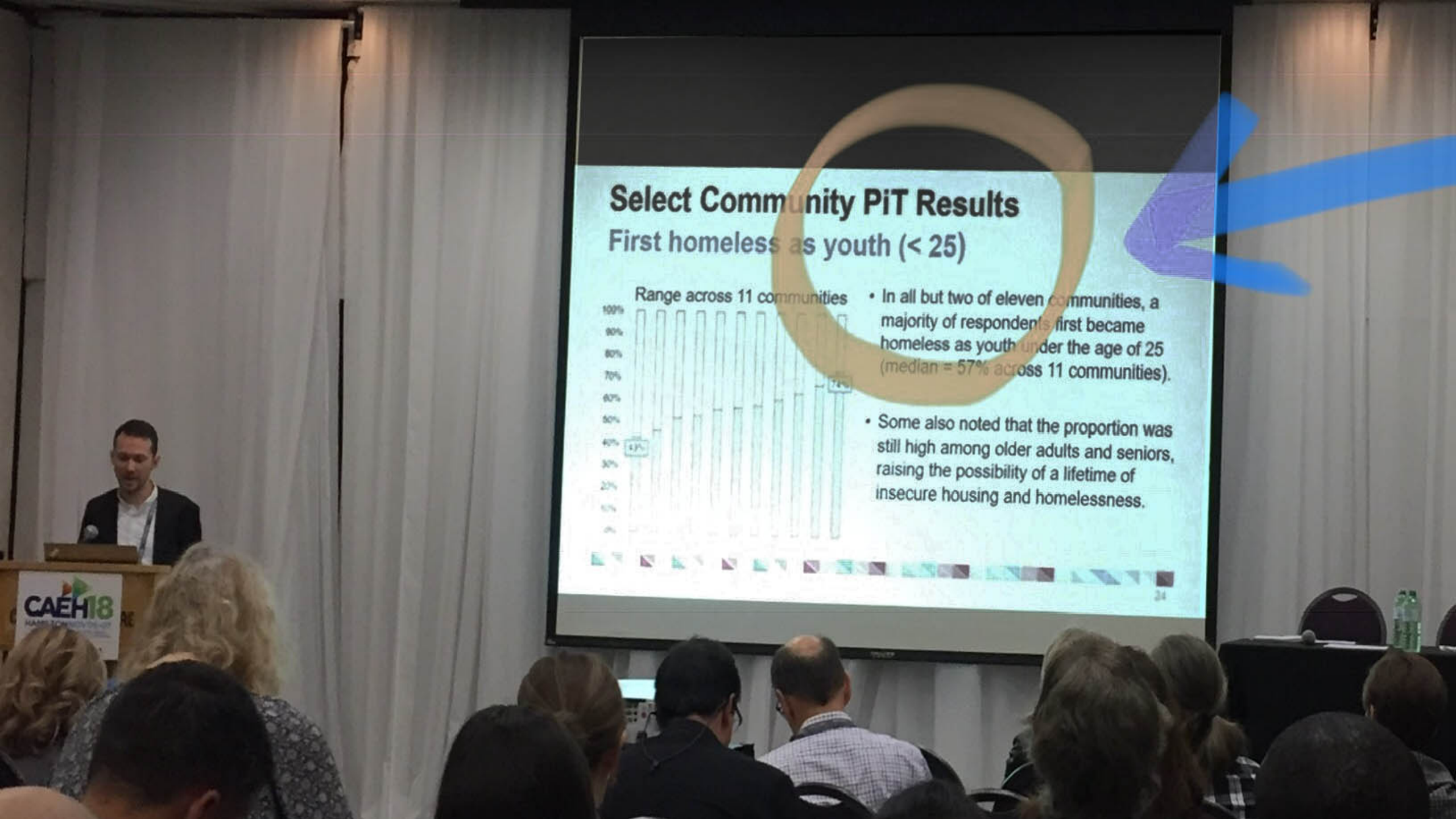
Second, experience of homelessness has a devastating impact on health, safety, mental health and well-being.

Third, some young people – Indigenous, LGBTQ2S, newcomer youth – experience additional burden of discrimination and exclusion.

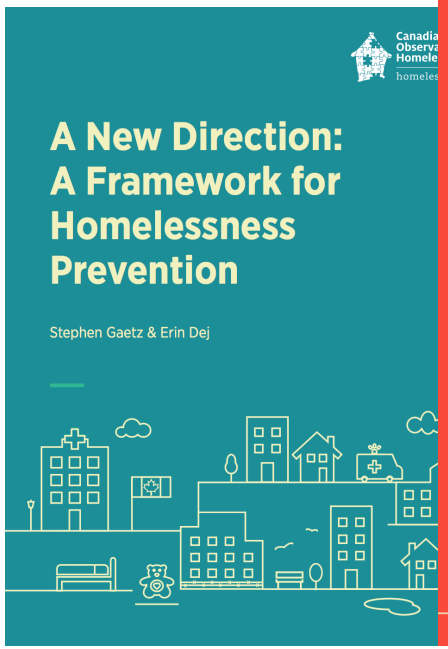
Fourth, the emergency response does not prevent or end youth homelessness.

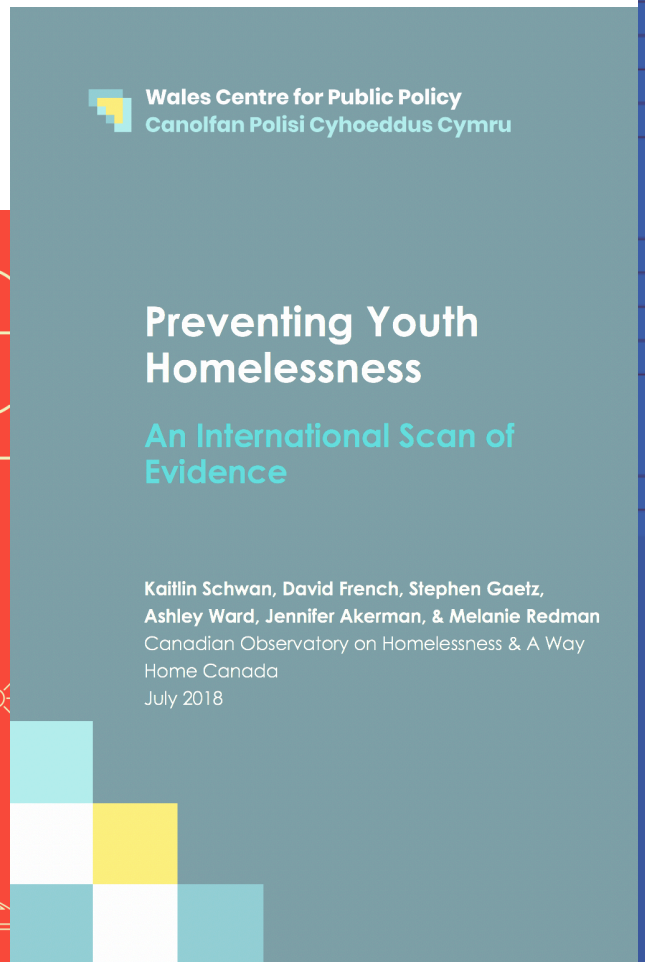
Fifth, our public systems are failing to prevent youth homelessness.

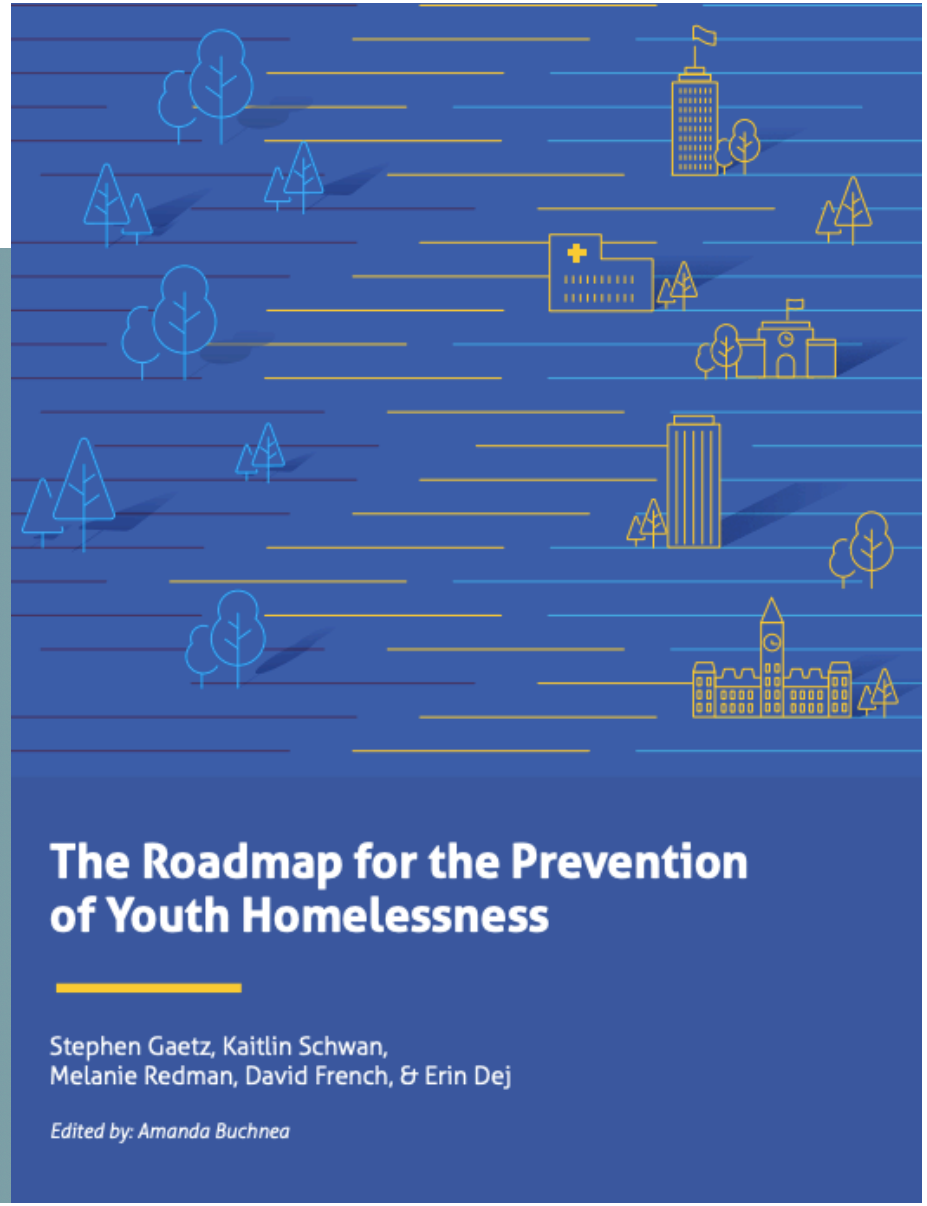
Sixth, people with lived experience of youth homeless strongly profess the need to shift to prevention.


Select Community PiT Results
First homeless as youth (< 25)
Range across 11 communities
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
74%
• In all but two of eleven communities, a majority of respondents first became homeless as youth under the age of 25 (median = 57% across 11 communities).
• Some also noted that the proportion was still high among older adults and seniors, raising the possibility of a lifetime of insecure housing and homelessness.
34
CAEH18

Doing the ground work







(Click on images for links)

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Prevention as a Fusion Policy issue

If higher levels of government provide a legislative and policy framework, as well as funding to support homelessness prevention, the homelessness sector and other community-based services will still have a key role in supporting marginalized and socially excluded populations.

Success relies on

Systems Integration

Mainstream Services

- Health
- Education
- Corrections
- Child protection

Homelessness Service Providers

Government and Funders

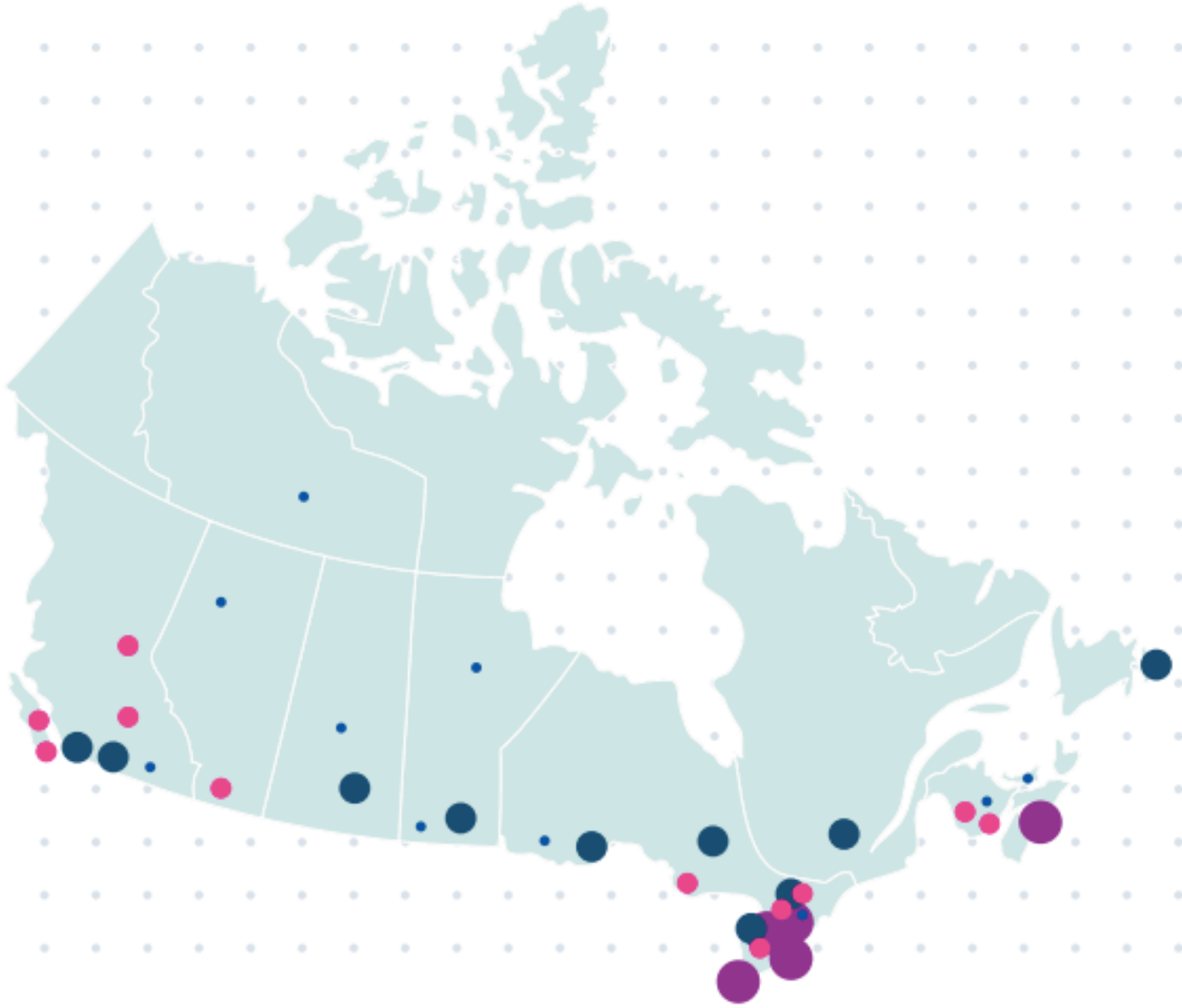
Unusual Suspects

- Landlords
- Police
- Private Sector
- Lawyers

SYSTEMS PLANNING TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS:

Community Progress and Priorities Across Canada

SYSTEMS PLANNING COLLECTIVE



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COMMUNITY SYSTEMS PLANNING TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS:

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Participants identified needing more technical support, training, and resources around these priority areas.

Policy Development

Relationship/ Trust-Building

Performance Management

Financial Scenario Modelling

Government Relations

Private Sector Engagement

Systems Mapping

Systems Integration

Change Management

Actionable Data & Analytics

Creating Action Plans

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SYSTEMSPLANNING
COLLECTIVE

Policy tools

Planning & practice tools

Voices need action!

Youth across Canada were clear:

We are waiting too long to intervene when a young person is at risk of homelessness.

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Part 2

The CASE STUDIES

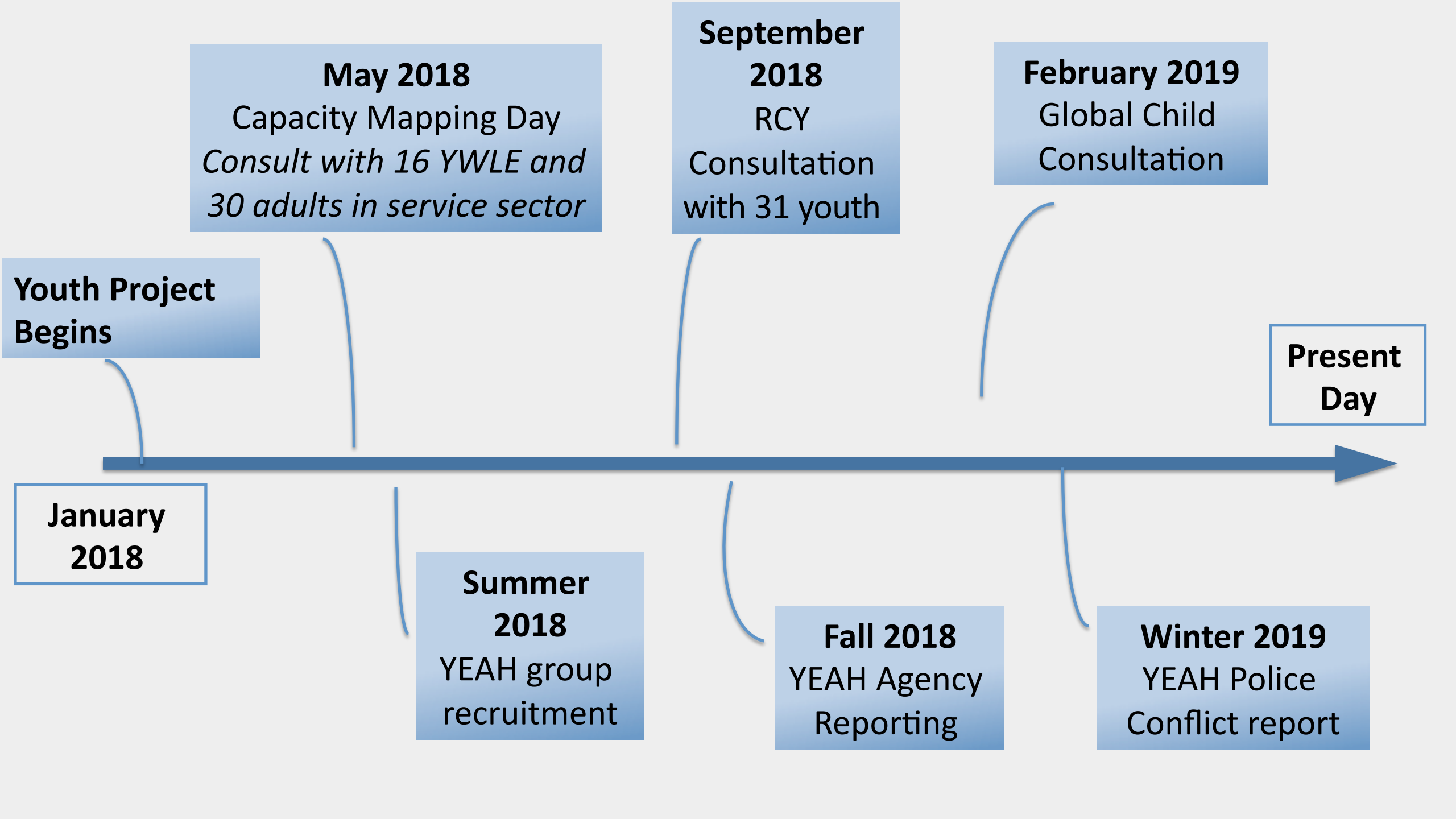
greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness

Youth Educating and Advocating about Homelessness

Youth voice is and always will be an integral part of our work.

Since September 2018, the YEAH group has grown immensely as individuals and as a group.

Here's how…


Youth Project Begins
January 2018
May 2018
Capacity Mapping Day
Consult with 16 YWLE and 30 adults in service sector
Summer 2018
YEAH group recruitment
September 2018
RCY Consultation with 31 youth
Fall 2018
YEAH Agency Reporting
February 2019
Global Child Consultation
Winter 2019
YEAH Police Conflict report
Present Day

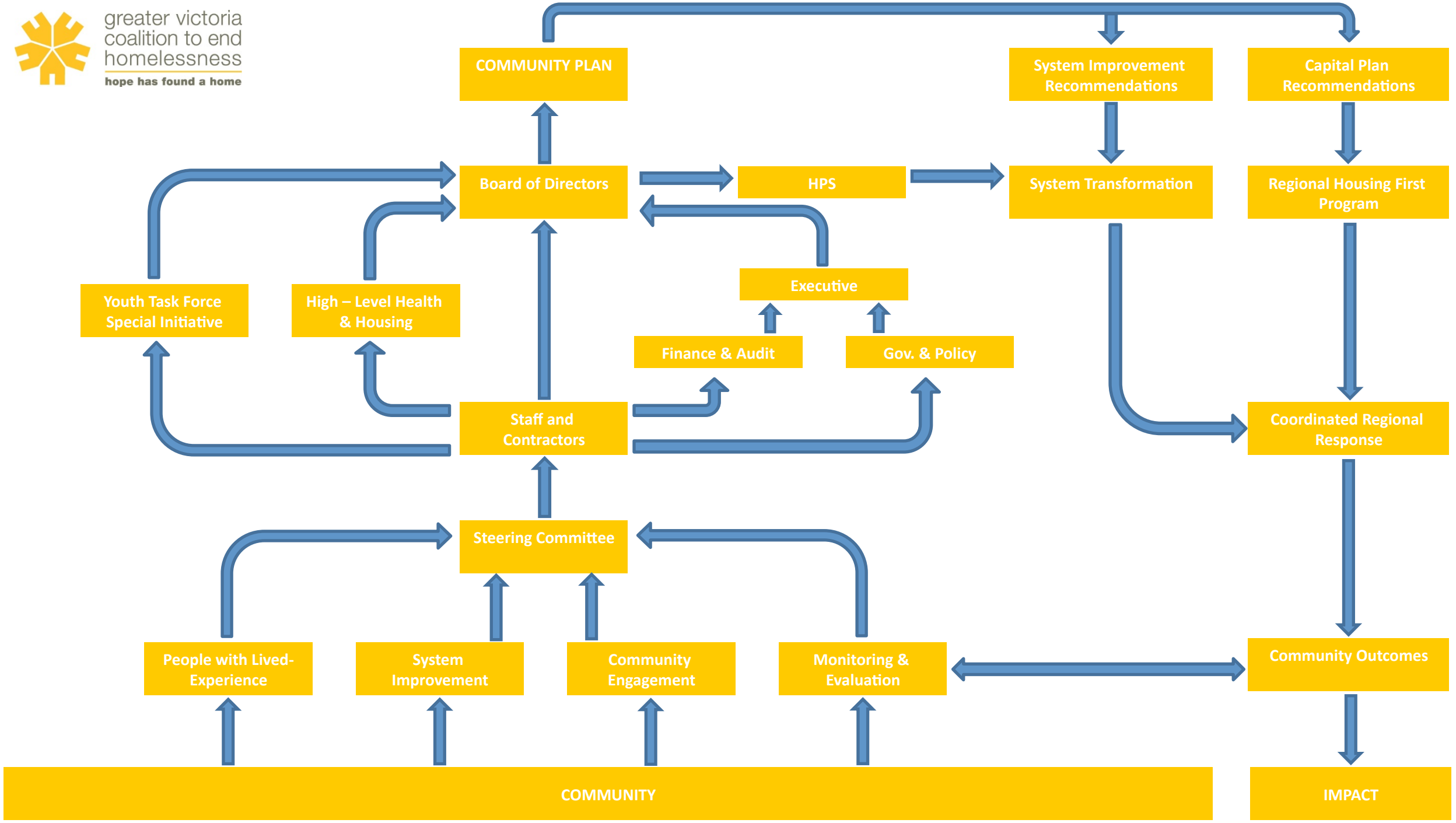
CASE STUDY: YEAH GROUP

Comprised of 5 youth with lived experience of homelessness, YEAH is a case study that proves the positive long-term affects of youth voice.

Summer 2018	**Group forms –** trust-building, storming/norming/forming phase
September 2018	**First assignment <u>given</u> –** feedback well received, changes implemented
October 2018	**Personal growth –** Participants report feeling more empowered
November 2018	**Leadership growth –** Youth start brainstorming and pitching <u>their own</u> ideas to research
Winter 2018	'Conflict with Police' project commences, police symposium funding secured, MCFD case studies, landlord registry project research, social enterprise work
February 2019	Youth become leaders in the community – co-facilitating consultations and empowering their peers

greater victoria coalition to end homelessness

hope has found a home



Youth Task Force

Oct. 2017 – April 2019

Youth Homelessness is...

...a social issue

...an experience

...not an identity

THE JOURNEY BEGINS ... with a

BELIEF SYSTEM

It's the only 'System' you need

This system is a group of humans who believe in..

Partnership
Listening
Voice

Collective Action IS the Tool Kit for Social Change!

Youth Advisory Committee

Service Providers

FEAR

Youth Task Force

Funders and Government

- Speak truth to power
- Assume funders want to win too

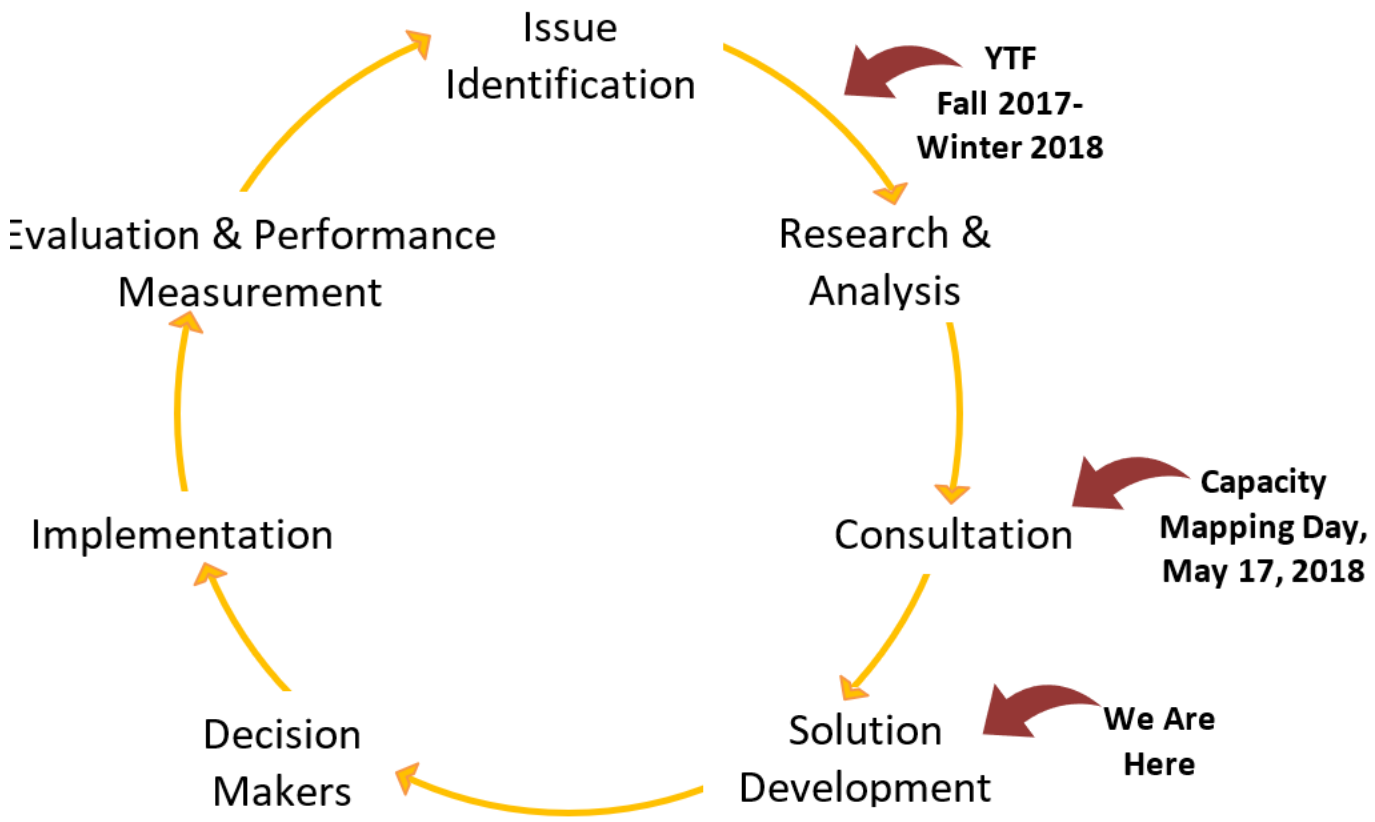
Get in the Sandbox Together

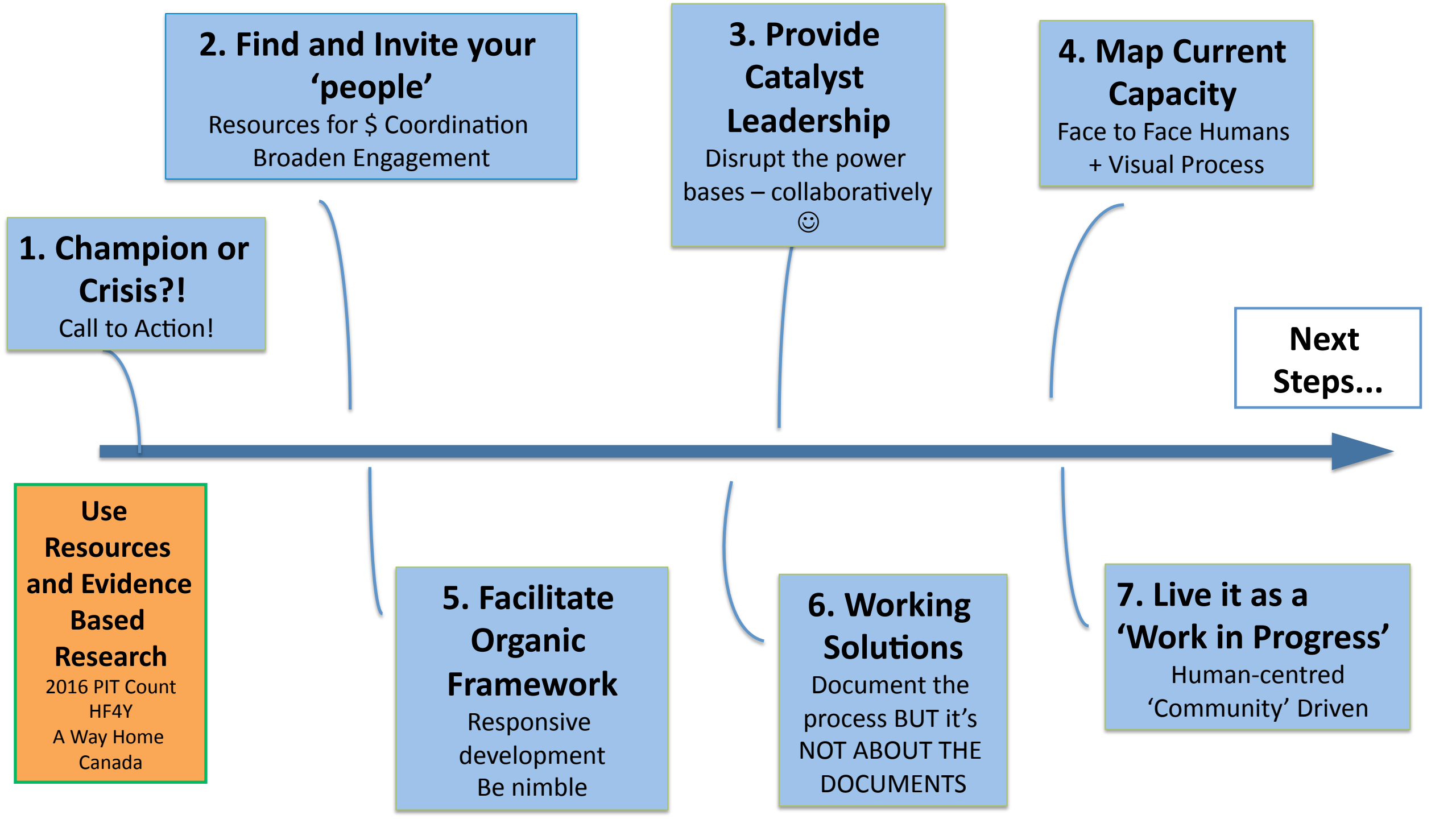
Play Nice!

Youth Task Force

- Be brave
- Assume good intent

The collective process...




2. Find and Invite your 'people'
Resources for $ Coordination
Broaden Engagement
3. Provide Catalyst Leadership
Disrupt the power bases – collaboratively
☺
4. Map Current Capacity
Face to Face Humans
+ Visual Process
1. Champion or Crisis?!
Call to Action!
Next Steps...
Use Resources and Evidence Based Research
2016 PIT Count
HF4Y
A Way Home Canada
5. Facilitate Organic Framework
Responsive development
Be nimble
6. Working Solutions
Document the process BUT it's NOT ABOUT THE DOCUMENTS
7. Live it as a 'Work in Progress'
Human-centred
'Community' Driven

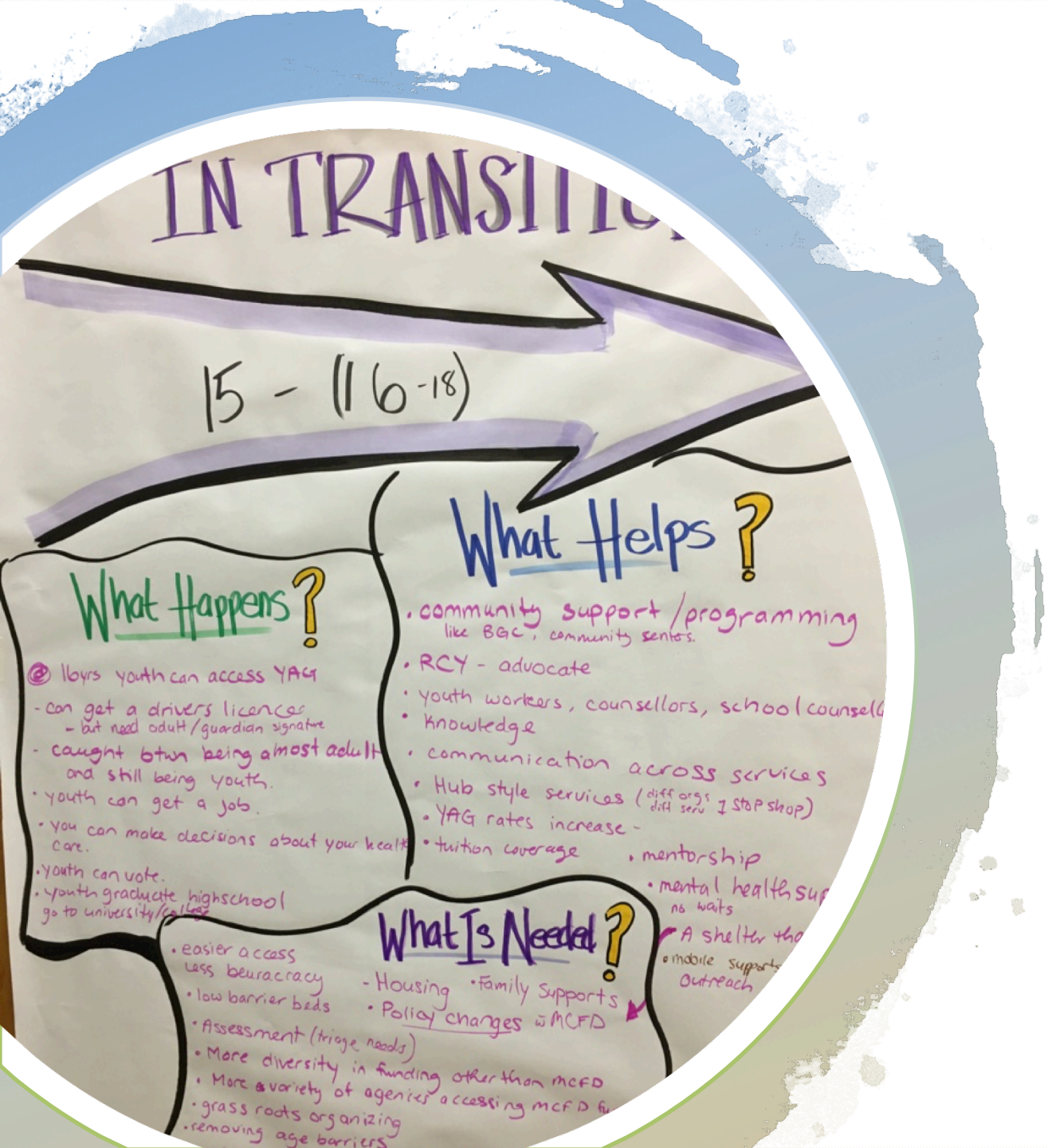
True collaboration leads to unanticipanted collateral benefits!!

Solutions	First Step – Current Capacity Mapping
YTF Monthly Meetings	• Mapping youth specific programs and services - group support for service providers (youth experiencing mental health and additions/ incarceration/ aging out of care/ pregnant and parenting / indigenous culturally relevant/ LGBTQ2S+)
Landlord Registry	• In progress idea – Social Equality - Landlord Training
MCFD Case Studies/ RCY Consult	• Ministry of Child & Family Development and VIHA meet at Director level to coordinate at local / regional levels • Research Initiative – Emotional Support – Case Ratios
Social Enterprise	• Fighting Nimby in Centennial Square City of Victoria staff onboard for access to public spaces
Youth + Police Symposium	• Unsolicited funding application from United Way

CAPACITY MAPPING DAY = RELATIONSHIP BUILDING 101

55 humans total 16 youth with lived experience

HOUSING FIRST FOR YOUTH
- Models of Accommodation
RETURN HOME
• Family Reconnect
CRISIS HOUSING
INDEPENDENT LIVING
• SCATTERED SITES
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
• SHORT TERM, LONG TERM or PERMANENT
• OPERATED BY an ORGANIZATION
• ATTACHED TO DIRECT SUPPORT
TRANSITIONAL HOUSING
• END GOAL IS TO TRANSITION
HOUSING
• TIME LIMITED + TEMPORA
• OFTEN SHARED SPACES WITH INTEGRATED
WAITLIST
WAITLIST

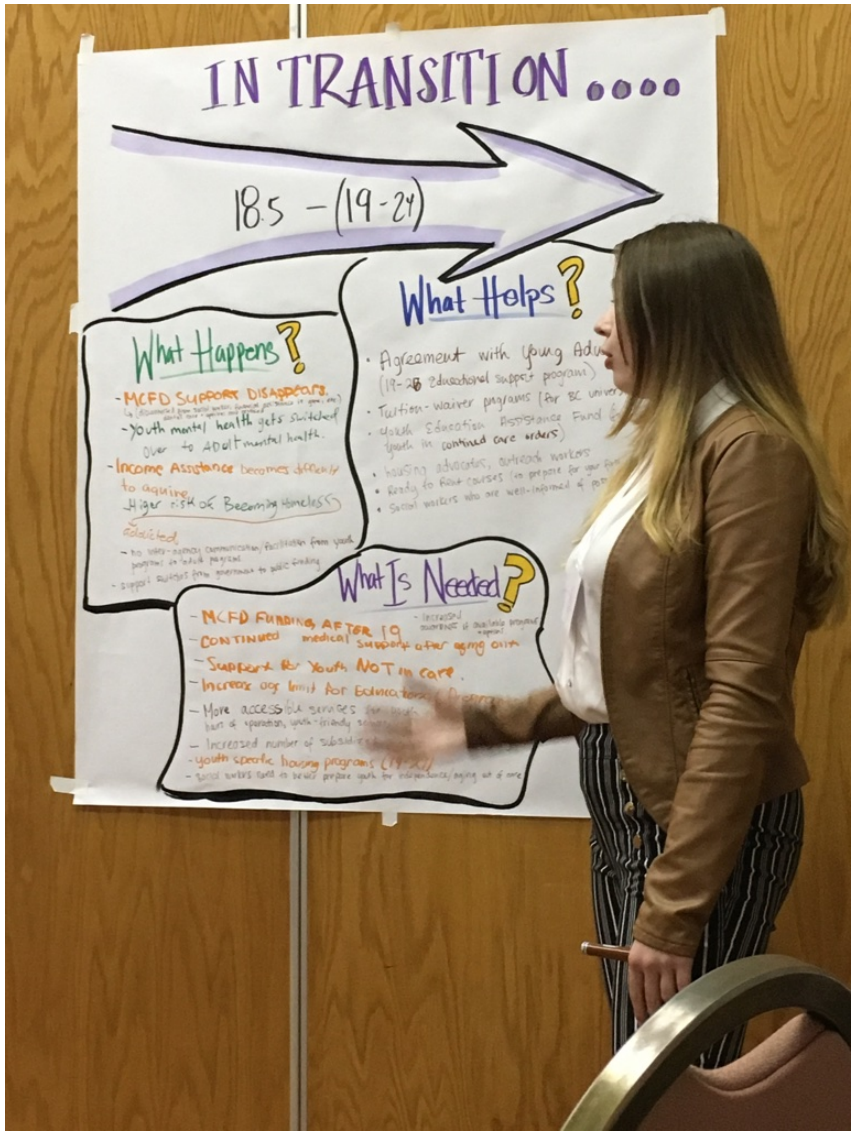


Ask questions that lead to solutions!

And we end where we began...with Emily.

Partnership
Listening
Voice

BELIEVE TOGETHER
- it’s all you really need



MAKING WAVES

Systems Change in Newfoundland and Labrador

CHRA National Congress

April 4, 2019

CHOICES FOR YOUTH

CHOICES FOR YOUTH

- Founded in 1990 after the Mr. Cashel Orphanage closure
- Non-profit, registered charity
- Professional services agency

- 1500+ youth served annually
- 130+ staff members
- Multiple service, programming and housing sites

Through innovative programming and social enterprises, we help youth and emerging adults secure stable housing, education and employment, while working toward family stability and better health.

HOUSING **EMPLOYMENT** **FAMILY** **HEALTH**

WHO WE SERVE

We work with at-risk and homeless youth ages 16-29.

Common challenges we come across include:

- Family Conflict and/or Instability
- Disrupted Education
- Low Income and/or Poverty
- Marginalization and/or Discrimination
- Mental Health and/or Addictions Challenges
- Abuse and/or Other Forms of Victimization
- Experiences with the Child Welfare & Criminal Justice System

OUR APPROACH

Harm Reduction

Housing First for Youth

Trauma-Informed & Recovery Oriented Practice

Youth Empowerment

Community Partnerships

AREAS OF WORK

Outreach & Health

Supportive Housing & Shelter

Family

Social Enterprise & Employment

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: GEOGRAPHY & CONTEXT

- **530,000 people; 228,000 in St. John's CMA**
- **No other communities larger than 25,000**
- **St. John's in the extreme east of the province; 8 hours drive to Corner Brook, 20+ hours to Happy-Valley Goose Bay**
- **Services for vulnerable populations concentrated in St. John's**
- **More than 40% of the St. John's homeless population come from outside the city**

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: HOW CFY FITS IN

- **The only organization in the province with a specific mandate to serve at-risk youth**
- **Large, high-capacity organization**
- **Investments in policy and advocacy work**
- **Record of success and great relationships with government**
- **Little experience with work outside of the city or with Indigenous communities**

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR: MAJOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

- **All-Party Committee on Mental Health and Addictions**
- **Premier's Task Force on Educational Outcomes**
- **New Children, Youth, and Families Act**
- **New Housing and Homelessness Plan**
- **Choices for Youth's Social Innovation Project and Provincial Expansion** ("We Are Ready" Report)
- **Integrated service delivery**
- **Statement of Principles**

OUR VISION

- **A network of integrated service delivery hubs across the province**
- **Provincial coordinated access for youth**
- **A shift of services towards prevention, family stability, and employment supports**
- **More supportive housing for youth in more locations**
- **Youth choice and youth voice**

Statement of principles:
http://www.choicesforyouth.ca/principles

OUR APPROACH

- **Showing up in person**
- **Identifying local partners**
- **Understanding regional differences**
- **Focusing on youth voices**
- **Getting out ahead of government**
- **Engaging national colleagues**
- **Bringing in the “unusual suspects”**
- **Doing our research**

THANK YOU

CHOICES FOR YOUTH