Solving Youth Homelessness

Lessons from Canada

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Homelessness in a Global Landscape

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YOUTH HOMELESSNESS *in* CANADA

BY THE NUMBERS

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Canada

Population: 35 Million

Canadian Numbers

- 40,000 over a year
- 7000 on any given night
- 20% of ALL homeless are between 16-24 years old

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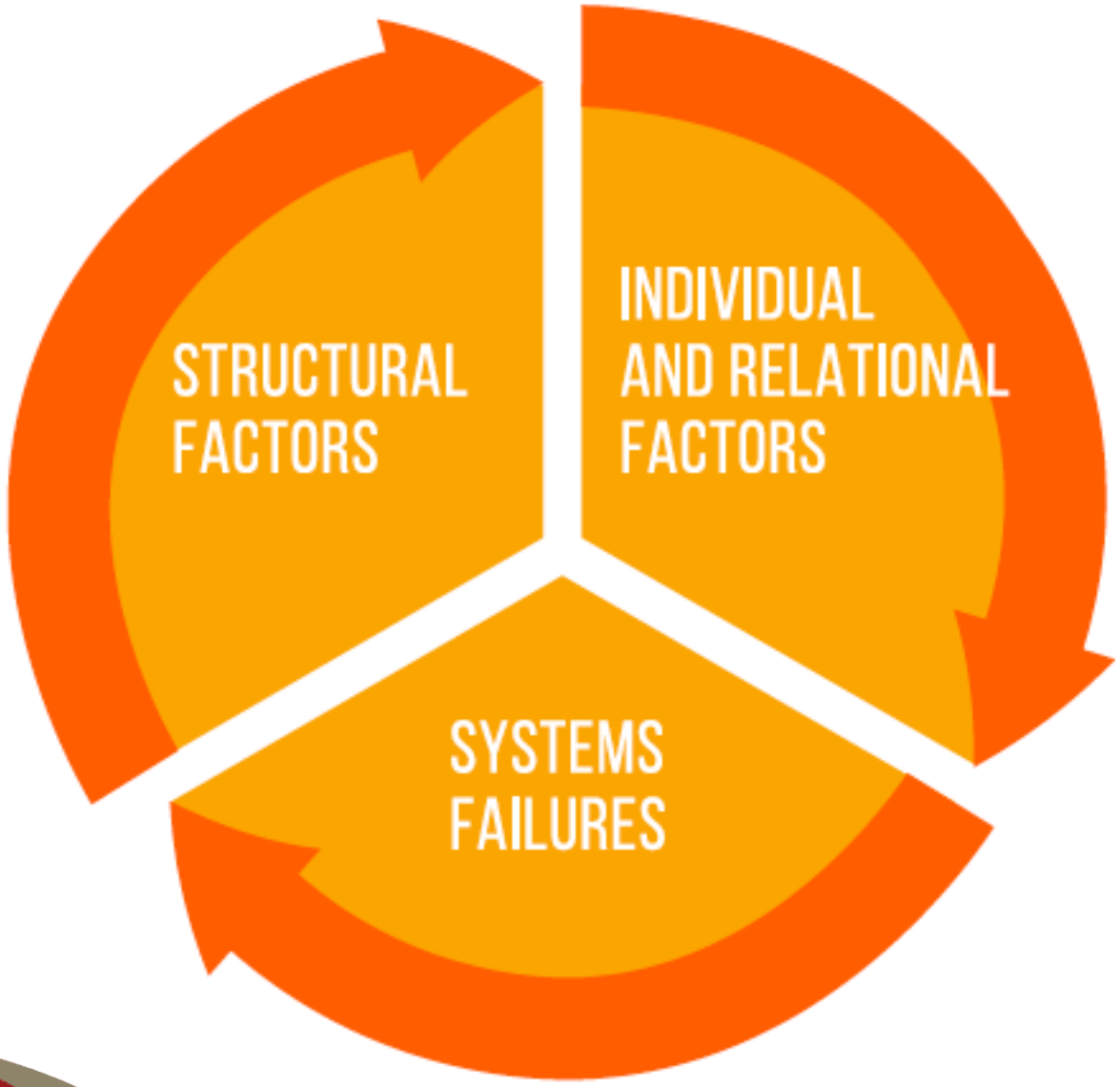
Characteristics of population

- 2/3 are male
- LGBTQ youth over-represented
- Some minority populations are over-represented (including Aboriginal youth)
- Age difference matters – (under 16, 16-18, 19-25)

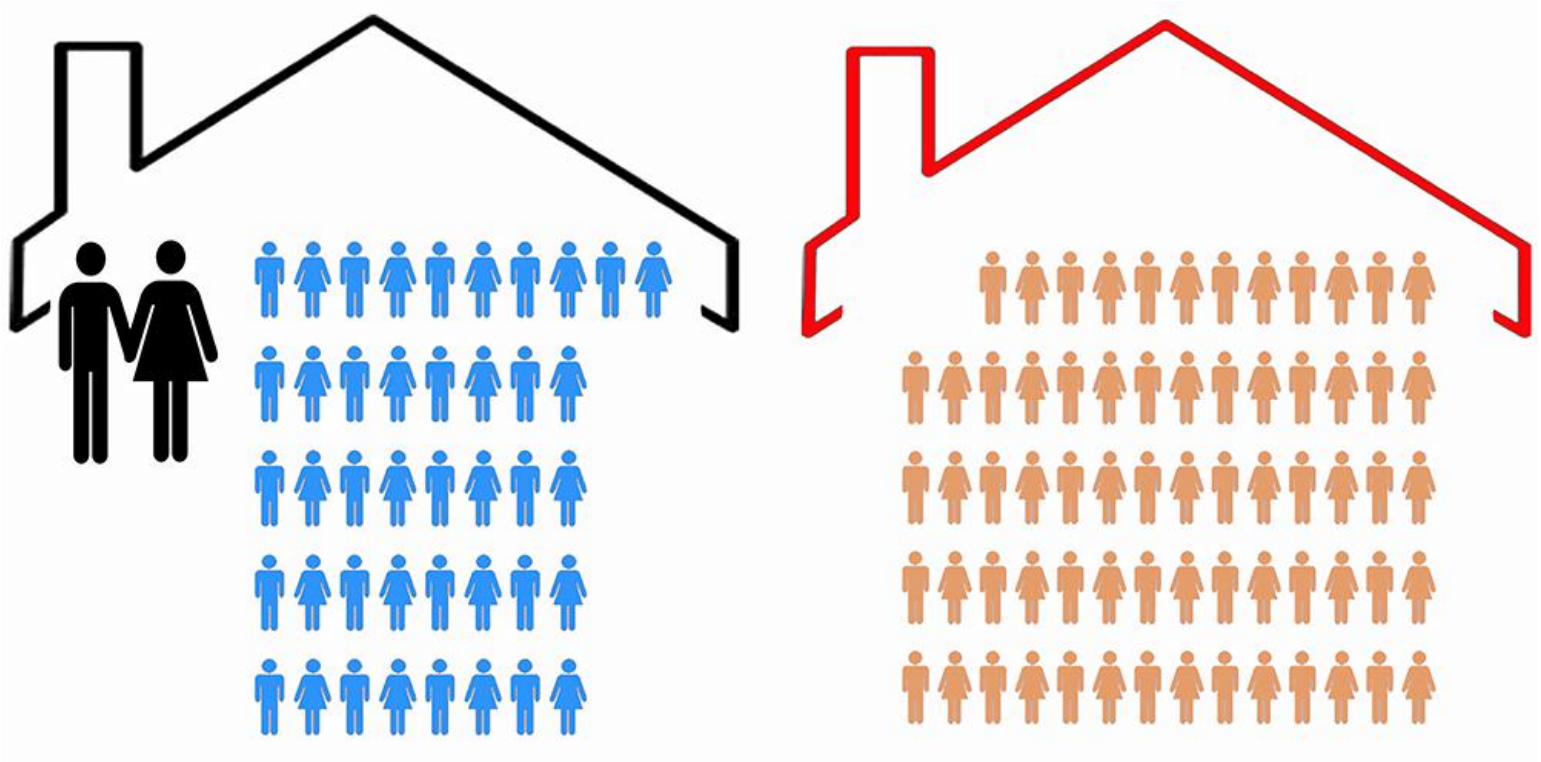
DIAGRAM 1 *Causes of Youth Homelessness*



Socio-economic shifts have changed the nature of adolescence and young adulthood.

- **Rise in credentialism** (important to stay in school longer)
- **Full time jobs paying living wage are scarce** (most young people can only get low paying part time work)
- **Young people stay in the parental home much longer**

Over 42% of young people aged 20-29



Live with their parents!

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Youth homelessness must be understood as different from adult homelessness, both in terms of causes and the experience of life on the streets

5 KEY DEVELOPMENTS *in* CANADA

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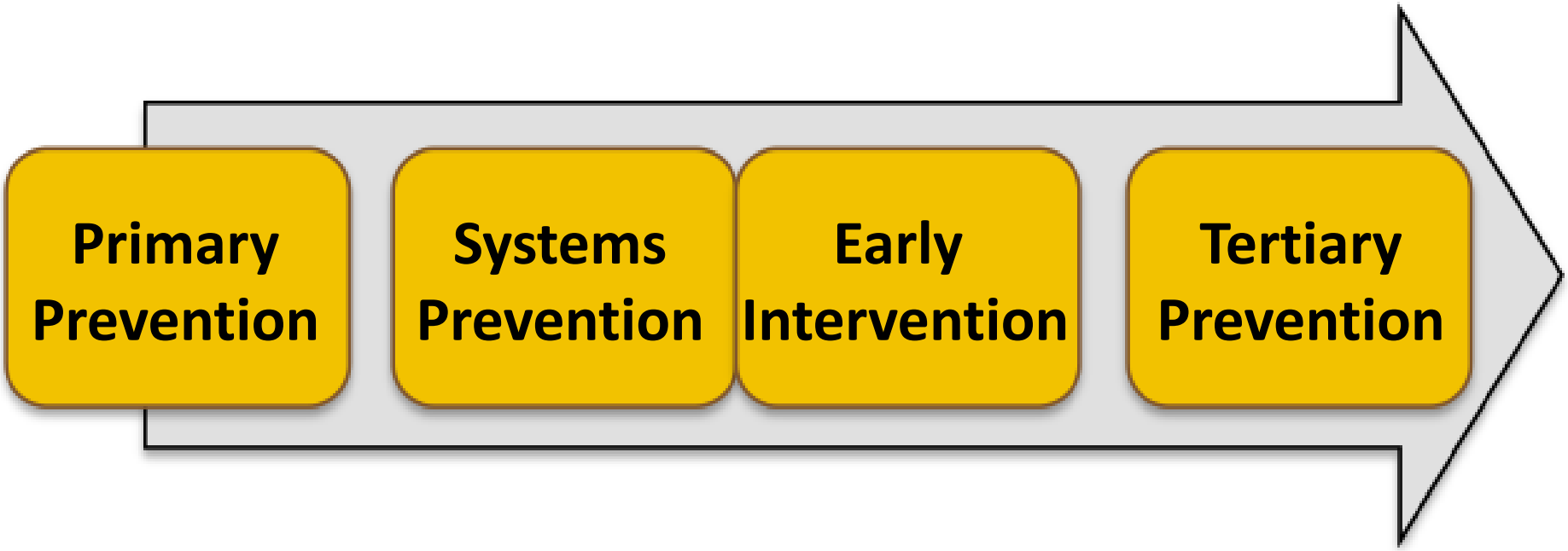
Part 1

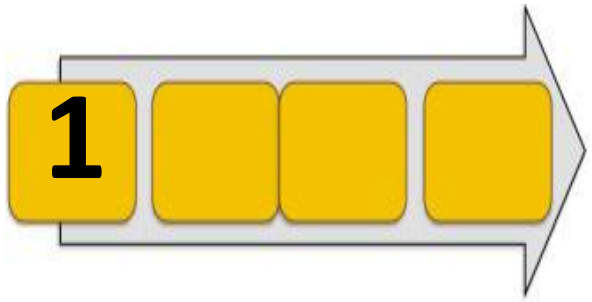
Shifting the focus from Managing Homelessness

Canadian response to homelessness

Can we do better?

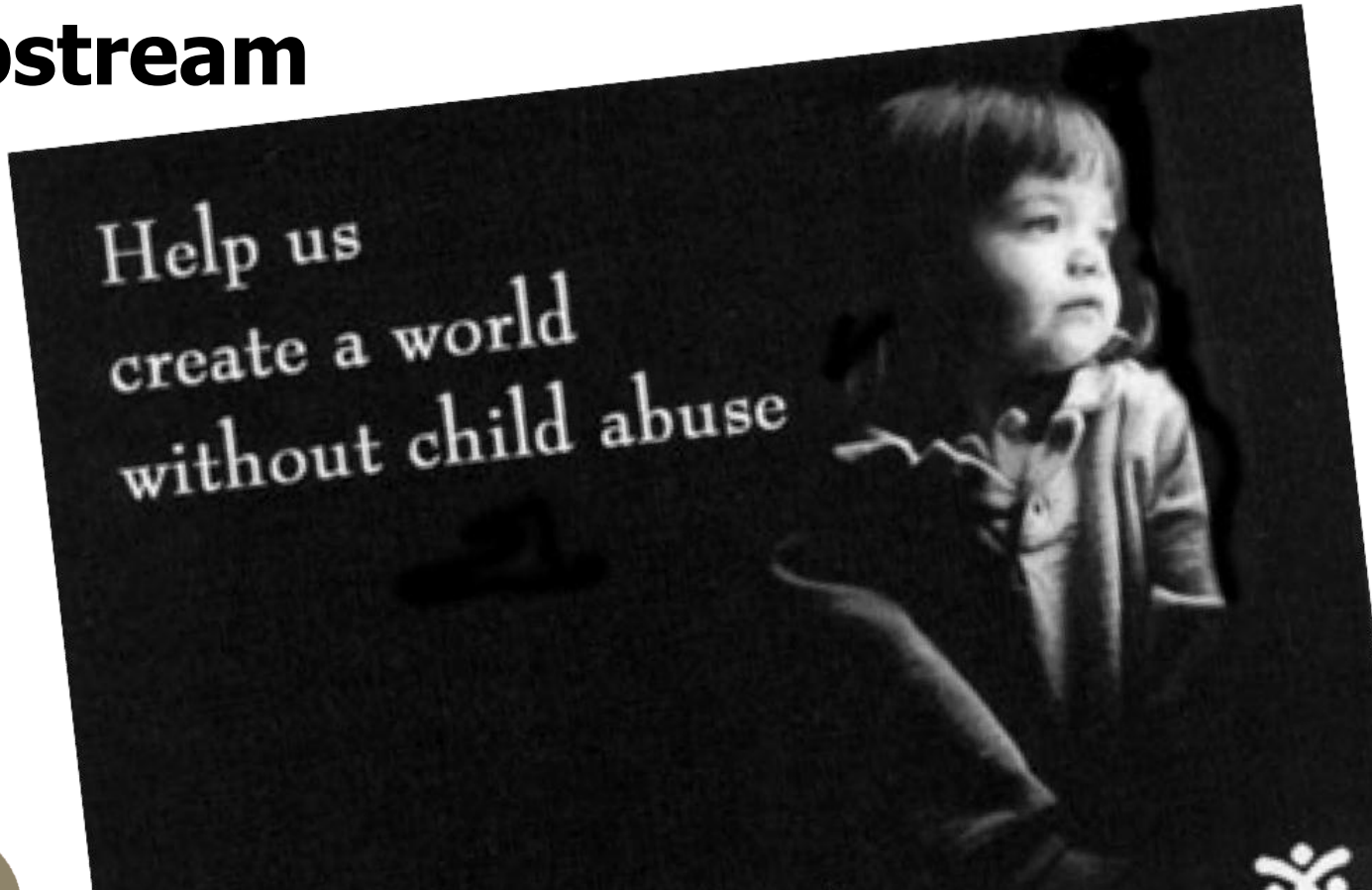
A Framework for
Thinking About Prevention



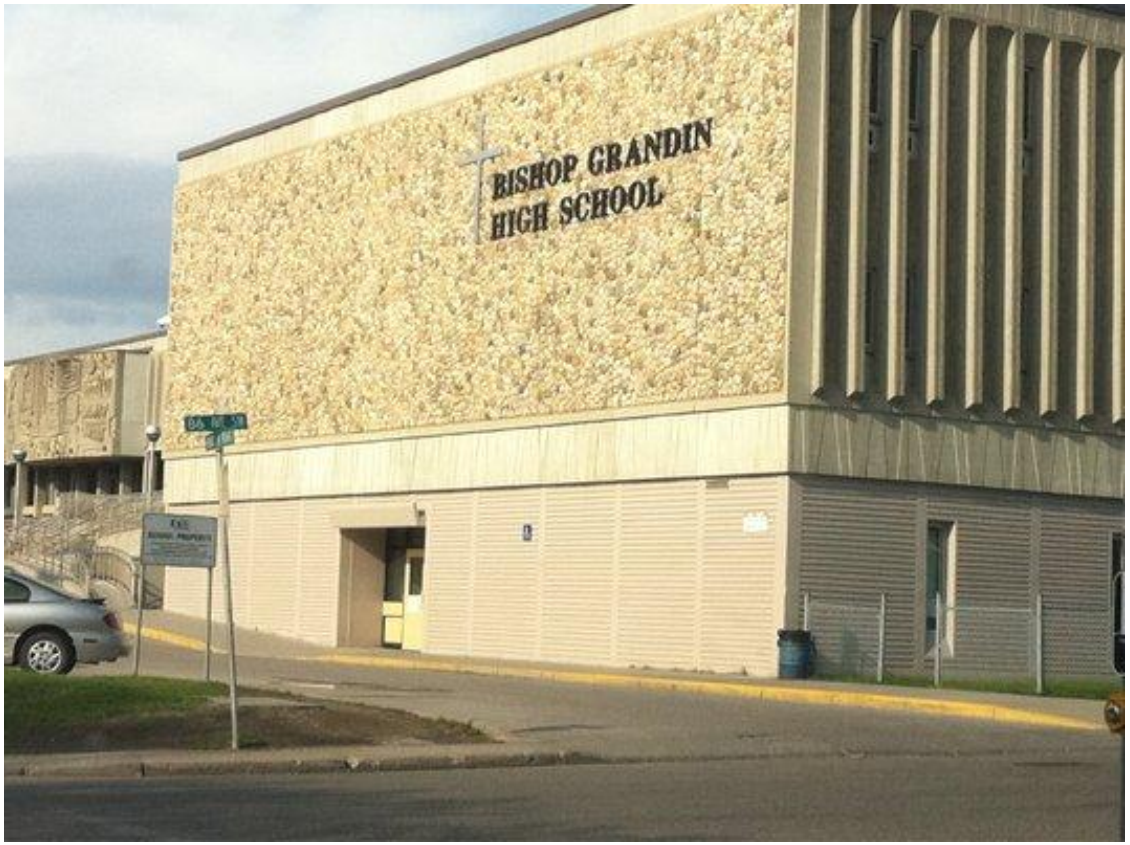


Primary Prevention

Working upstream to prevent new cases



OUTREACH: Working in Schools



Working with Families

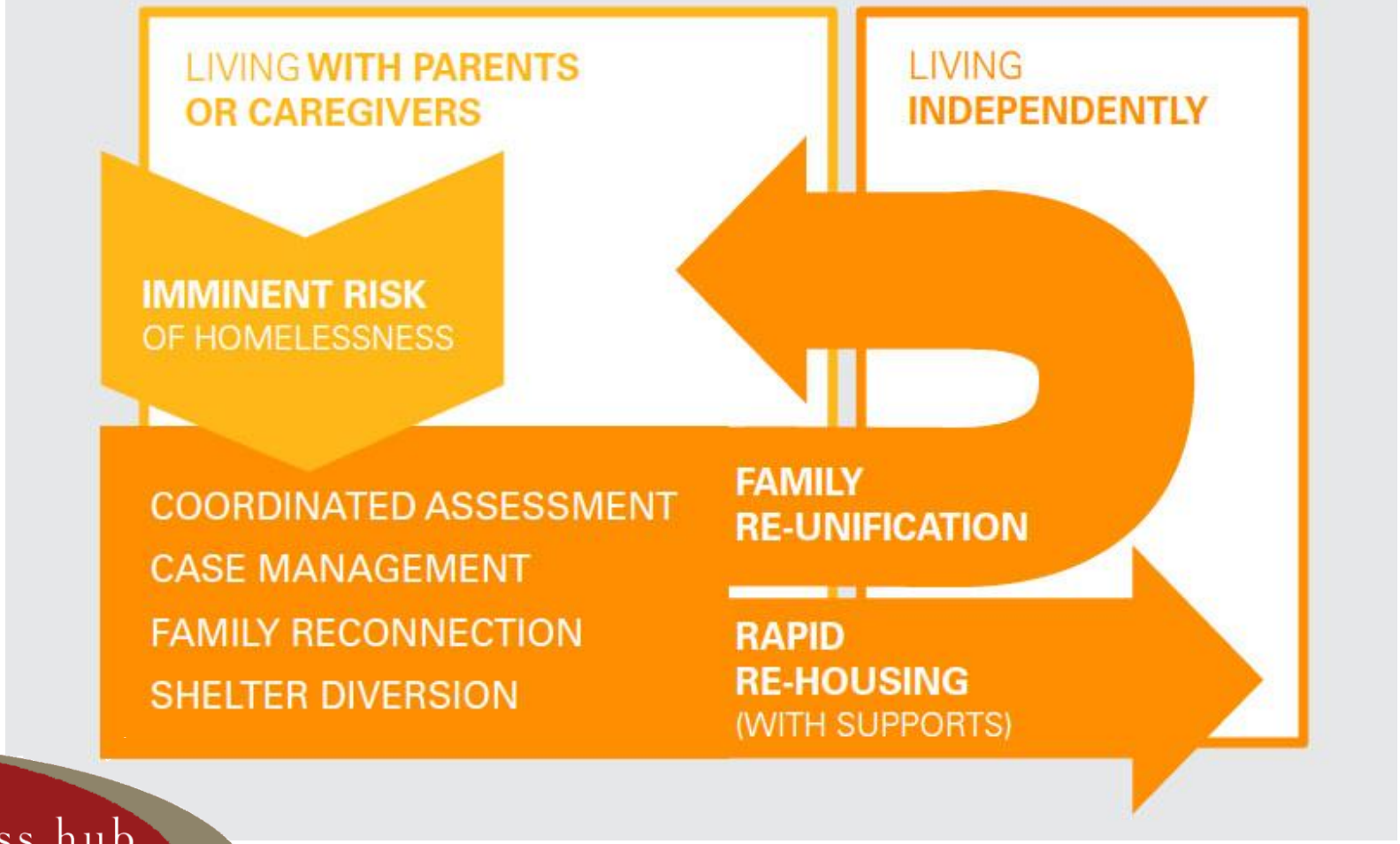
- Connecting with resources
- Strengthening anger management and conflict resolution skills within families
- Foster parenting skills and healthy childhood development
- Ensure young people have access to early childhood education, adequate nutrition and enriched engagement (arts, sports)

Systems Prevention

Zero Discharge into Homelessness

- Child Protection
- Youth criminal justice
- Mental health

3 Early Intervention



4 Tertiary Prevention

Stopping homelessness from happening again!

Part 2

Government steps up

Provinces and Territories

Key responsibilities for:

- Health care
- Social services
- Child protection
- Corrections
- Housing
- Municipalities

Solving youth homelessness is *NOT* solely the responsibility of the sector

Supporting Healthy and Successful Transitions to Adulthood

A Plan to Prevent and Reduce Youth Homelessness in Alberta

Prepared by:
Policy Program Integration
Family Violence Prevention and Homeless Supports

A Collaborative Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

The overarching goals of the Youth Homelessness Plan are two-fold:

- **Prevent youth from becoming homeless** through family supports and education; and
- **Rapid rehousing of homeless youth** through family reunification or supportive living by utilizing a client-centred approach.

Policy Shifts

- From fragmented service delivery to a coordinated response to youth homelessness.
- From crisis management of youth homelessness to prevention and rapid rehousing.
- Improved data collection to inform scope and measure success.

A Collaborative Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

PRIORITIES			
Prevention and Awareness	**Early Intervention**	**Client-Centred Supports**	**Research and Evaluation**
GOALS			
Prevent youth from becoming homeless.	**Youth receive supports before they become entrenched in homelessness.**	**Youth have access to client-centered supports.**	**Youth homelessness in Alberta is understood, measured, and evaluated.**
STRATEGIES			
• Supports to family and parents • Needs/risk assessment tool development • Public education and awareness	• Outreach • Encourage multi-system collaboration • Accessibility to mental health and addictions services • Rapid rehousing of youth in crisis • Improve access to learning, training and employment	• Targeted responses for specific populations • Single point of entry into the system • Harm reduction model • Expansion of the youth housing continuum	• Consistent data collection and data sharing • Scoping and monitoring the Youth Plan's success • Evidence-based best practices
Stakeholder Engagement			
Community partners and youth mobilize solutions to end youth homelessness.			
• Community capacity-building • Youth leadership and engagement			

Part 3

Addressing Diversity

Supporting

LGBTQ Youth

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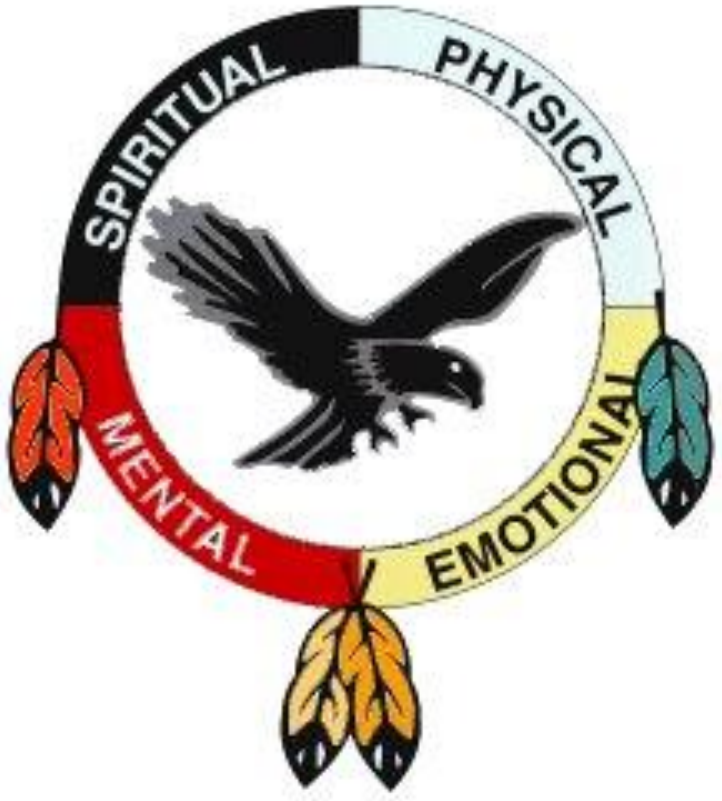
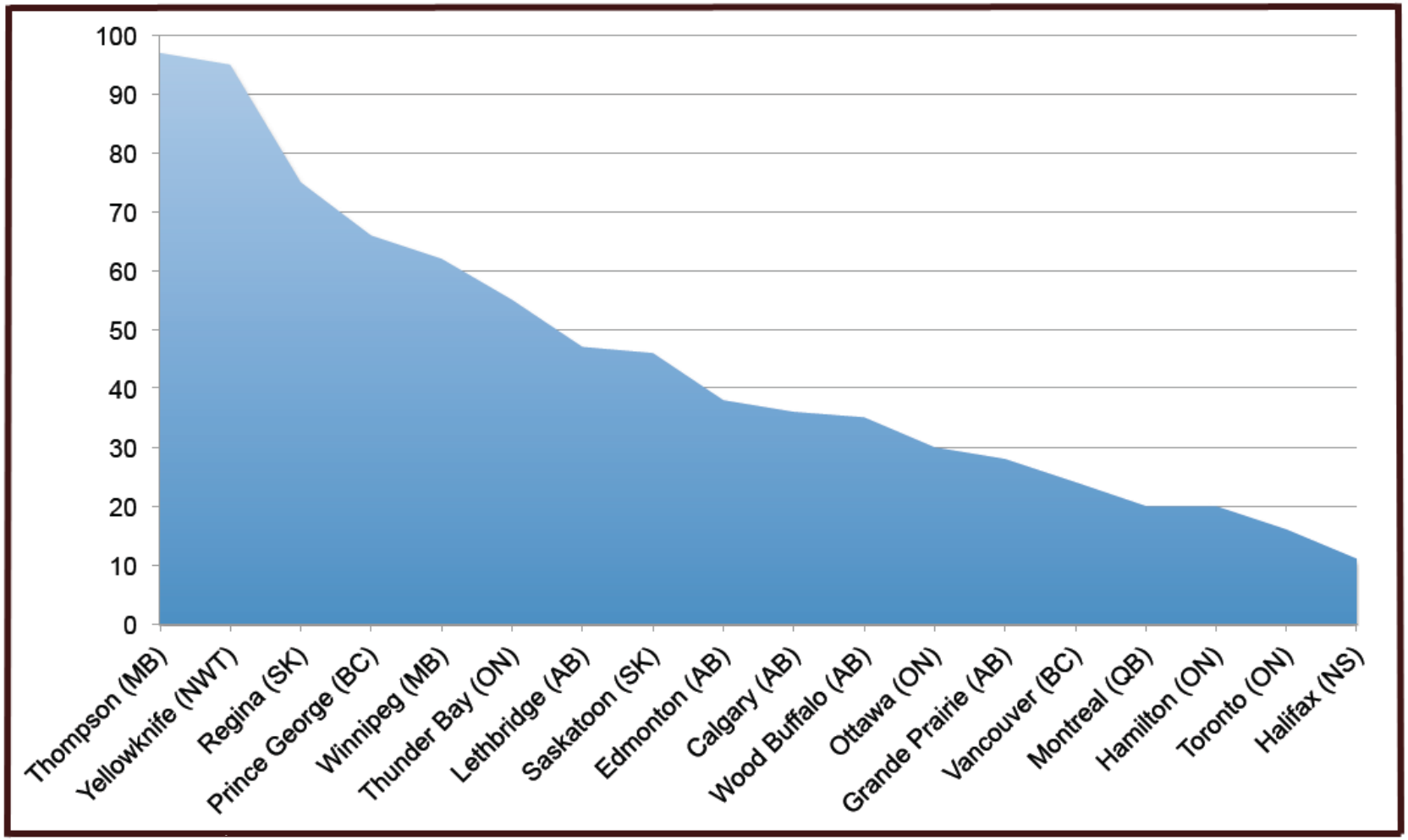
Addressing Aboriginal youth homelessness



Addressing Aboriginal youth homelessness

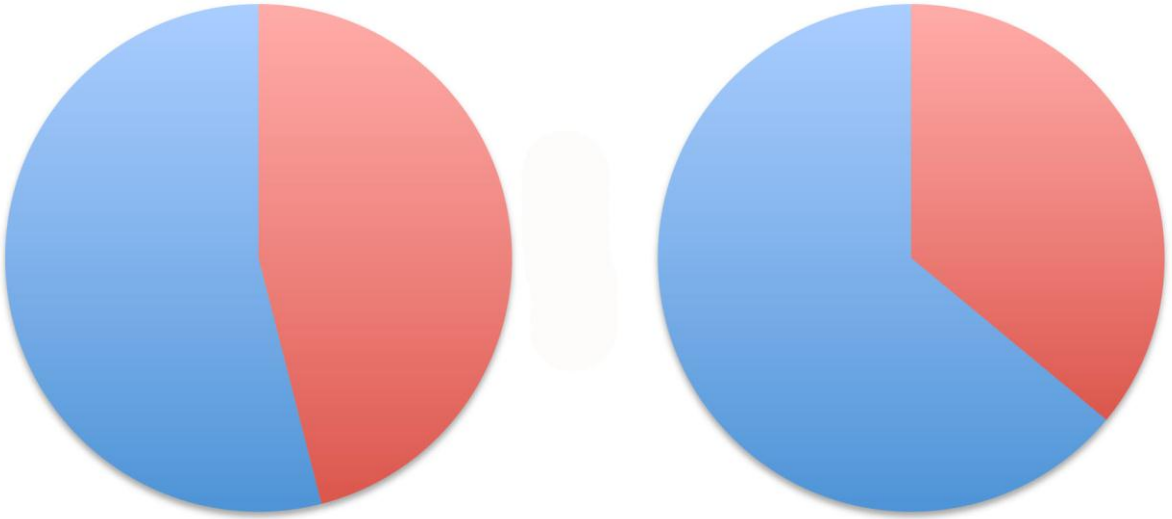
Tina Fontaine

Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada



Belanger, et al. 2012

Aboriginal Children and Youth in Care In Canada



2005/06

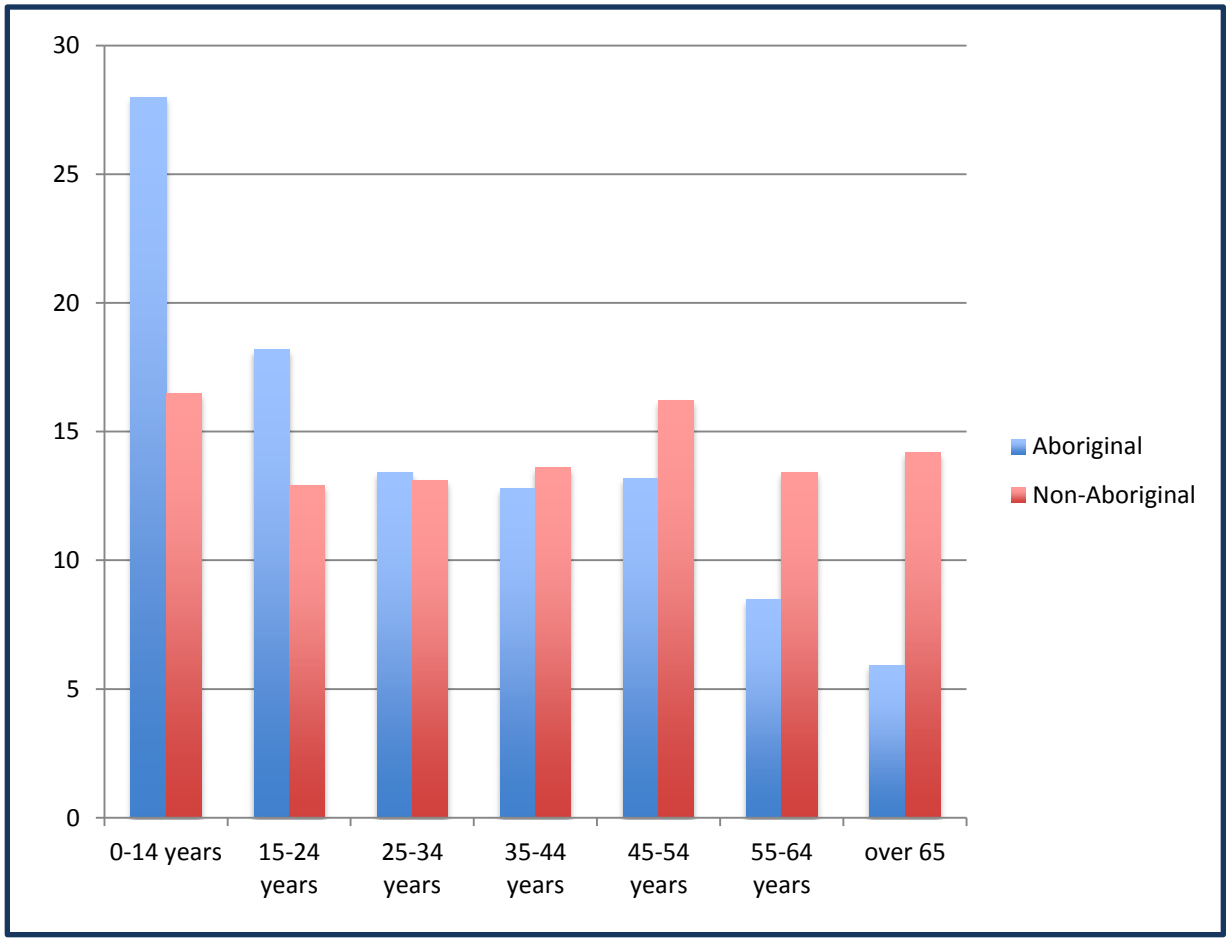
54%

2012/13

64%

Population Profile based on Age

Aboriginal vs. Aboriginal in Canada



Part 4

Research!

COH
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Youth Homelessness

Research Agenda

Youth Homelessness Research Agenda

(in partnership with NLCYH, MLC)

1 Youth Point-in-Time Counts

2 Data Management support

- Assessment
- Case management
- Information management systems
- Evaluation and Quality Assurance

3 Program Model Case Studies

4	National Youth Homelessness Survey
5	Cost Effectiveness Study
6	Prevention Framework
7	New research questions
8	Knowledge mobilization strategy

Coming of Age

http://www.homelesshub.ca/comingofage

Housing First Framework for Youth

report available at:

ww.homelesshub.ca/housin
firstyouth

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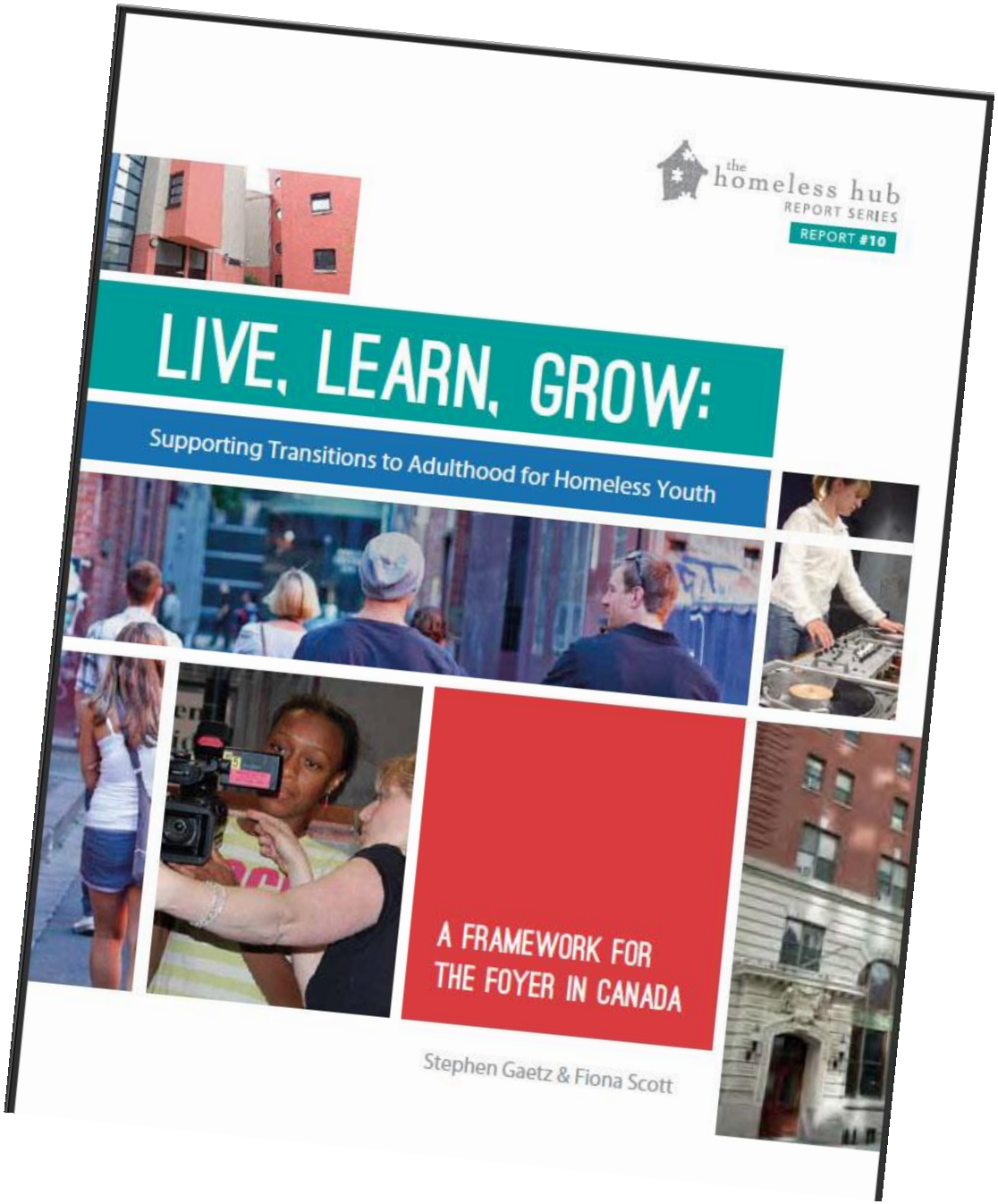
FOYER Report and Tool kit



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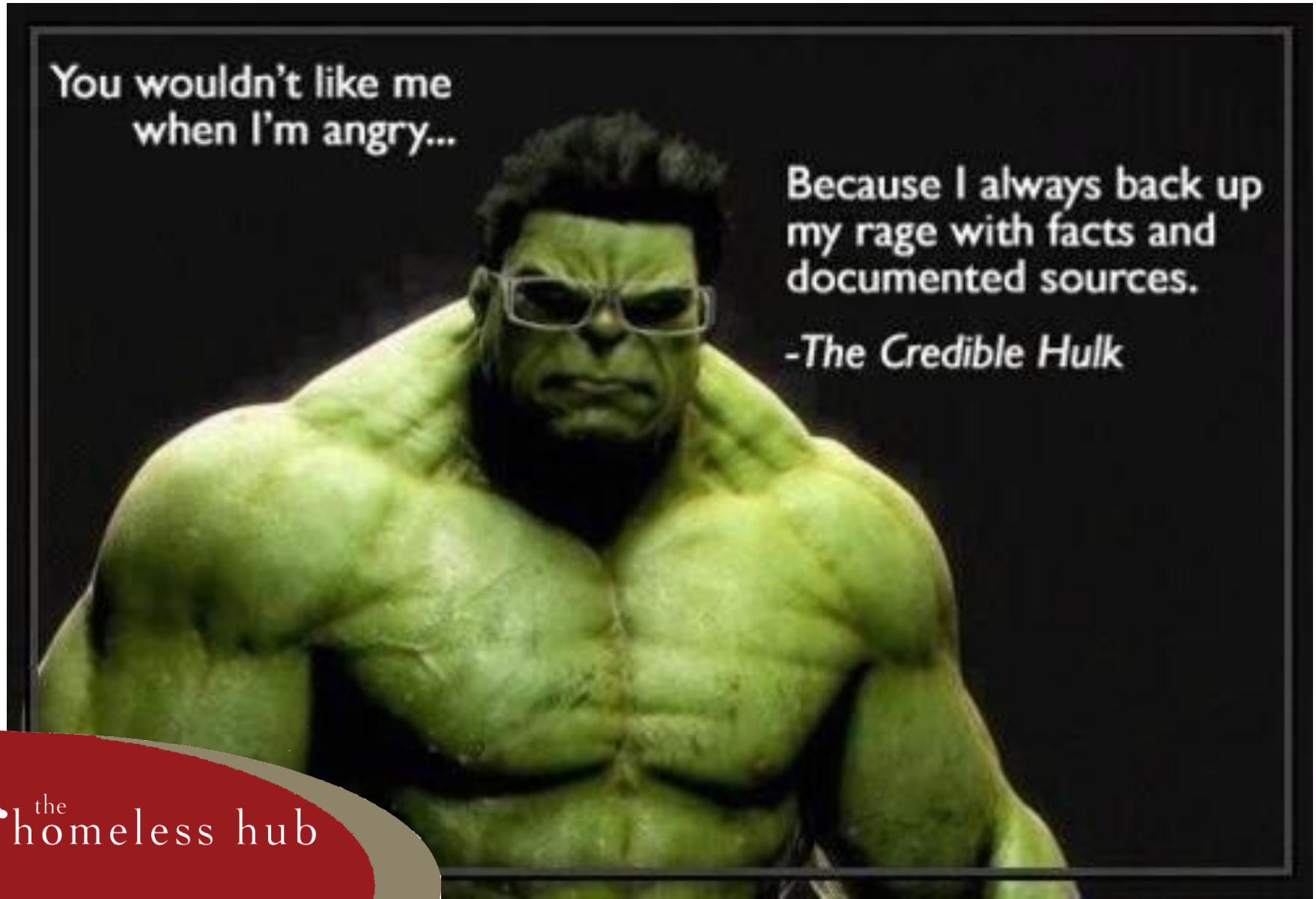
Research Evidence Matters!



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Part 5

Supporting communities & government

A WAY HOME

Working Together to End Youth Homelessness in Canada

Key National Partners

A Way Home

OUR GOAL:

Cultivating a national coalition of stakeholders across sectors to mobilize for systems alignment/integration & policy change

- **Youth Homelessness on agenda of decision makers**
- **Youth Homelessness on public agenda**
- **Working to align interested funders with our national vision to *Prevent, Reduce & End youth homelessness***

A Way Home

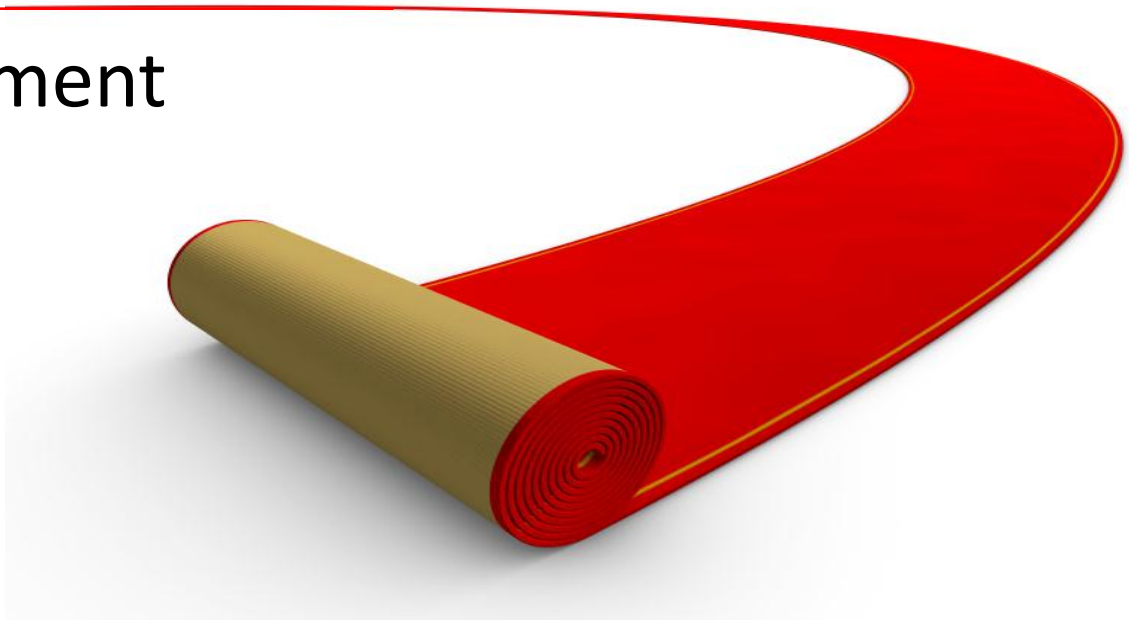
Key Constellations of Activity

A Way Home

Planning Support

Implementation Support

- Sustainability planning
- Communications strategy
- Change management
- Funder alignment
- Evaluation



A Way Home

HELP!?! Technical Support

A Way Home

Questions or comments?