

MAKING  
THE SHIFT

Youth  
Homelessness  
Social Innovation Lab

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# ABOUT US:

***A Way Home*** is a national coalition reimagining solutions to youth homelessness through transformations in policy, practice and planning.

# How we work

**Collective Impact** involves a group of relevant actors from different sectors working together to address a major challenge by developing and working toward a common goal that fundamentally **changes outcomes for a population.**





# MAKING THE SHIFT

youth homelessness  
demonstration lab



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youth homelessness social innovation lab

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

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





The importance of  
developing a response  
based on the needs of  
developing adolescents  
and young adults.



# Housing First for Youth Demonstration Projects



**Ottawa** - Housing First for Youth

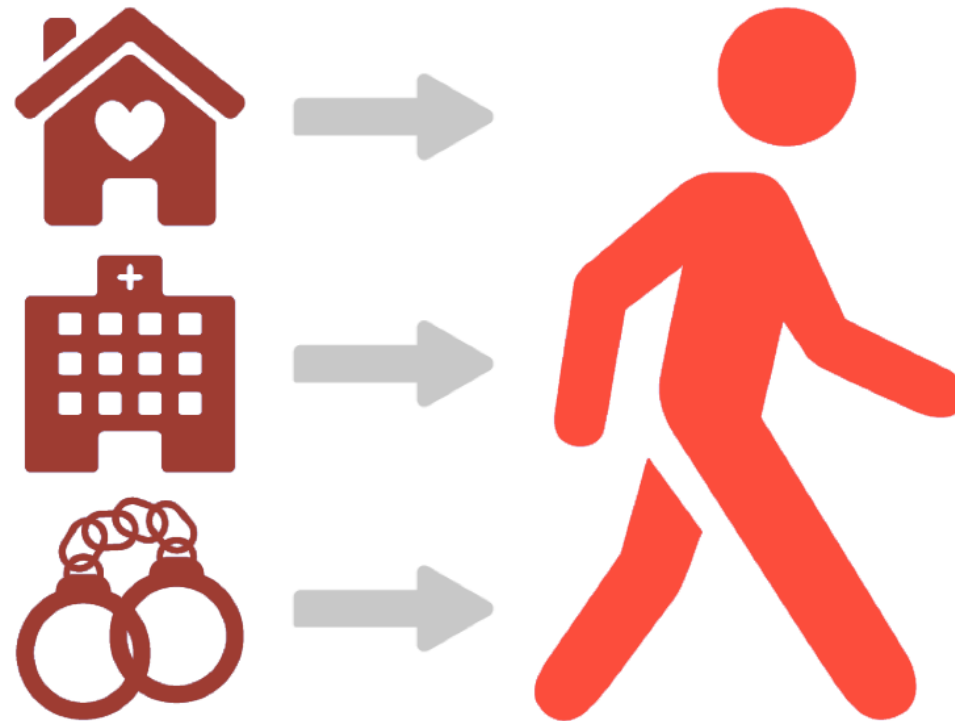
**Toronto** - PREVENTION focus:  
Housing First for Youth leaving care

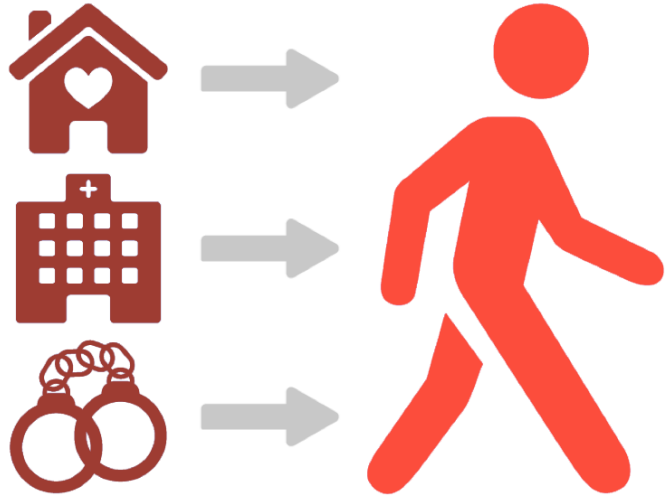
**Hamilton** - Housing First for Indigenous  
Youth (An Indigenous led project)



# Supporting young people exiting **PUBLIC SYSTEMS**

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# Housing First 4 Youth Leaving Care

- Supports for youth up to 25
- Prioritization
- Transitional planning begins early
- Post-discharge systems navigation support
- Opt out, opt back in



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# Adapting HF4Y for Indigenous Youth

Indigenous issues cross cut all themes and aspects of the project due to the **social context** homelessness; all MTS partnerships strive to build relationships with Indigenous communities at multiple levels.



# The importance of cultural reconnection:



- Learning about culture including cultural practices - smudging, gift blanket
- Places to feel safe and practice culture
- Engagement with elders
- Indigenous ways of knowing – Medicine wheel, Circle of Courage, 7 Grandfather teachings
- Brought into ceremony
- Healing

“Endaayaang is infused with culture from day one. Making the Shift has been very supportive in the development from grounding the project in ceremony to how the research will be captured in order to reflect a true Indigenous view.”

Sheryl Green,

Indigenous Youth in Transition Worker,



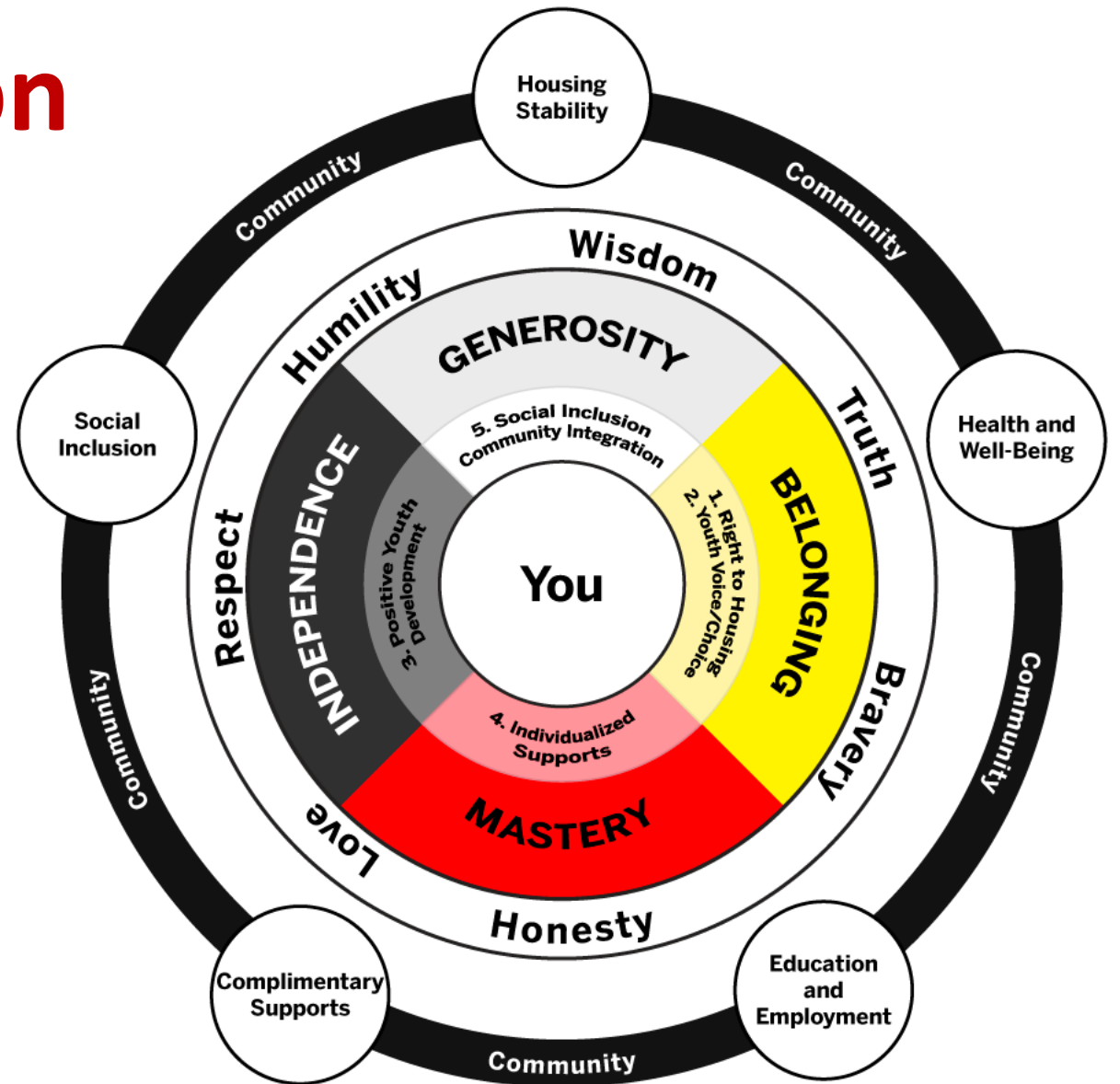
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Resource Centre

# Indigenous Innovation

Combining:

- Medicine Wheel
- Circle of Courage
- 7 Grandfather Teachings
- with -
- 5 core principles of HF4Y



# Research and Evaluation

## Research:

- Qualitative and quantitative methods
- Outcomes tied to service and supports
- For HF4Y - Randomized Control trial

## Evaluation:

- Developmental Evaluation
- Outcomes Evaluation



# OUTCOMES



Outcomes are tied to the service delivery models. Because the focus of these interventions is not just on independence, but on healthy transitions to adulthood, outcomes go beyond a simple measure of housing stability.





# Program outcomes



## 1) Housing stability

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



## 2) Health and well-being

- Enhanced access to services and supports
- Improved health
- Food security
- Improved mental health
- Reduced harms related to substance use
- Enhanced personal safety
- Improved self-esteem
- Healthier sexual health practices
- Enhanced resilience



## 3) Education and employment

- Established goals for education and employment
- Enhanced participation in education
- Enhanced educational achievement
- Enhanced participation in training
- Enhanced labour force participation
- Improved financial security



## 4) Complementary supports

- Established personal goals
- Improved life skills
- Increase access to necessary non-medical services
- Addressing legal and justice issues



## 5) Social inclusion

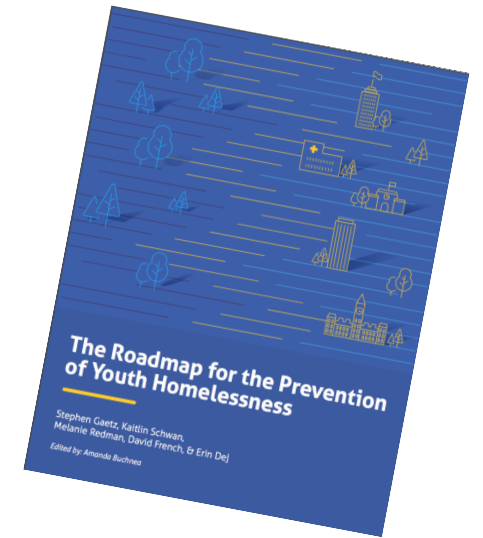
- Building of natural supports
- Enhancing family connections
- Enhancing connections to communities of young person's choice
- Strengthening cultural engagement and participation
- Engagement in meaningful activities





# Trainings, Tools & Resources

- THIS is Housing First for Youth Program Model Guide
- Housing First for Youth Online Training Modules
- Housing First for Youth Fidelity Test
- Housing First for Youth Operations Manual (Coming Soon)
- Family and Natural Supports Online Training Modules (Coming Soon)
- The Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness



# Youth Assessment and Prioritization (YAP) tool

For Making the Shift, we are using the **Youth Assessment and Prioritization tool**, because:

- It is based on the needs of developing adolescents and young adults
- It is strengths-based and rooted in a Positive Youth Development orientation
- It involves both client and staff knowledge
- It assists decision-making, and doesn't determine prioritization for you
- It can catch things that other vulnerability assessment tools cannot



For more information about Housing First for Youth in Canada, contact Heidi Walter at [hwalter@awayhome.ca](mailto:hwalter@awayhome.ca).

Visit [awayhome.ca](http://awayhome.ca) or [homelesshub.ca](http://homelesshub.ca) for direct access to trainings, tools and resources.