



COMPENDIUM OF PROMISING PRACTICES

SOLUTIONS LAB: ADDRESSING FAMILY HOMELESSNESS AT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL

This document summarizes the findings of an environmental scan of promising practices locally, nationally, and globally in the space of addressing homelessness issues for families. There are many other interesting and promising practices being experimented with as well.

The Promising Practices here are summarized to offer inspiration for what may be possible and helpful in the context of the Ottawa neighbourhoods Vanier, Overbrook, Forbes and Manor Park South. It is not to suggest that what has worked in another context will work here, so we look for design elements that achieve impact, and modify them, where possible, to adapt to our local context.

SECTION 1 contains a selection of successful programs that have been identified through a review of the literature and interviews with program managers.

1. Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC)
2. Family Shelter Diversion Pilot
3. Woodgreen Homeward Bound (a residential training and support program for single mothers)
4. Woodgreen collaboration (public private partnership to support residences below market rent for single mothers)
5. Families First (A stabilization program for families)
6. Adsum house (a public private partnership to create supportive housing)
7. Wabano (Coordinated access and flexible programs)
8. Social Letting Agencies (social enterprises that acquire properties and manage others through leasing arrangements to provide affordable housing)

SECTION 2 contains a selection of Promising Practices in Affordable Housing extracted from a document published by Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness entitled “Promising Practices in Affordable Housing” by Randalin Ellery, Director, Data Impact and Policy, CAEH. The full report outlines a number of practices of which eight different types of intervention are presented here:

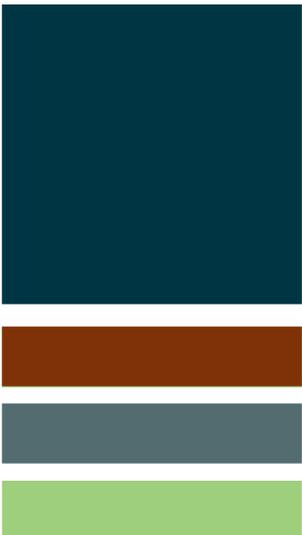
9. Rent Smart – a training program for prospective renters
10. Community Land Trust – Creates a private non-profit corporation to acquire and hold land - perhaps already underway in Vanier?
11. Density Bonuses – trading increased density allowances for affordable units inclusion
12. Inclusionary Zoning – Legal requirements for developers to include a number of affordable homes in new residential developments over a certain size - the legal framework for initiatives such as Montreal’s 20-20-20 program

13. Secondary Suites – self-contained living space in or on same lot as single family homes – Cities struggling to control “illegal” suites construction – no building permit, code violations etc.
14. Housing Trust Fund – Distinct funds to receive dedicated public revenues that can only be spent on housing
15. Demolition Policy – Normally for heritage conservation but also to Protect existing tenants in the event of demolition of their rental units
16. Cohousing – Intentional clustering of private homes around shared space – one example in Ottawa –<https://cohousing.ca/communities/on/terra-firma>

The [complete report](http://www.guelphwellingtonip.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/GWLIP-Promising-and-Innovative-Practices-in-Affordable-Housing-2019-Final-Report.pdf) is available at
<http://www.guelphwellingtonip.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/GWLIP-Promising-and-Innovative-Practices-in-Affordable-Housing-2019-Final-Report.pdf>

SECTION 3 contains 4 promising practices that involve policy shifts:

17. California rapid rehousing initiative
18. Montreal’s collective funding and accountability for homelessness services
19. Danish Homelessness strategy
20. Lutherwood Housing Services



1

EPIC¹

Toronto, ON

The Eviction Prevention in the Community program (EPIC) was established under the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) division, with the goal of mitigating citizen evictions in the city.



Approach & Target

Audience

Launched in March 2017 as a pilot project, The Eviction Prevention in the Community program (EPIC) was established under the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) division, with the goal of mitigating citizen evictions in the city (Ecker & Schwan, 2018). Different from housing options that focus more so on preventative measures concerning eviction, housing and homelessness, EPIC has established itself as a last-resort option for Toronto residents facing immediate housing crises (Ibid).

Program description

The program offers the following services:

- Wrap around case management supports
- Mediation with landlords to stabilize housing
- Referrals to community legal supports
- Navigation/accompaniment to the Landlord Tenant Board
- Assistance securing income supports, trusteeship, or money management programs

- System navigation and referral to other services and supports
- Rehousing supports and shelter diversion where the existing tenancy cannot be sustained

Financial supports available to EPIC clients can be grouped into community-based and internal supports. The community supports include the Housing Stabilization Fund and the Rent Bank. Internal income supports include the Housing Allowance, the Bridging Grant, and the Homelessness Prevention Fund.

Clients are directed into the program in the following pathway:

- The referral source pre-screen clients based on the eligibility criteria
- The referral source makes a service request. The EPIC service request referral form is submitted to the EPIC pilot lead
- The EPIC program lead verifies eligibility within one business day;

If accepted into the EPIC program, the client is assigned to one of the EPIC teams based on the client's geographic location. EPIC's service delivery relies heavily on mediative processes and the integration of necessary stakeholders, including landlords, legal and financial aid, rehousing facilitators and EPIC coordinators and clients, to determine next steps to prevent the homelessness of the client(s) in question (Ibid). Firstly, a negotiation is conducted with landlords to exhaust options such as payment plans, reduction of accruals and early intervention (Ibid).

Funding Model

The base budget for EPIC is \$920,000, funded through provincial and federal grant money. Additional funding of \$2.156 million from the city would have enabled an increase in the number of households served by the program to 800 in 2020 from

¹ Ecker, J., Hilden, S., & Schwan, K (2018). An Evaluation of the Eviction Prevention in the Community (EPIC) Program. Toronto, ON: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Retrieved from https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/8ea4-EPIC_Summary_Report_AODA.pdf.

433 in 2019, preventing homelessness for more than 2,500 people in all, annually, according to city budget notes.

Measures of Success

In terms of scope, EPIC highlighted that within the program's first year of full operation, during which 433 households received services (Kopun, 2020), 90% of clients were able to stabilize their housing situations, while 8% were successfully rehoused (Ecker & Schwan, 2018).

Subsequently, EPIC discovered that only an average of 2% of clients became homeless post-program (Ibid). In 2020, 800 households received aid from EPIC, preventing nearly 2,500 people from homelessness in Toronto over the course of the year (Kopun, 2020).

To gauge client/stakeholders satisfaction, EPIC conducted qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys throughout the program's inaugurated year (Ecker & Schwan, 2018). Overall, it was discovered that client satisfaction in relation to the provided services and support rested at 9.5 out of 10 (Ibid), while those enrolled in the program at the time of the study identified a quality of life averaging 7 out of 10 (Ibid).

Would it work in Ottawa?

In consideration of the presented information, there is no doubting that EPIC is, in fact, a promising practice brimming with potential. However, in relation to Ottawa, it is unclear whether the program would experience the same success.

There is a market for EPIC in the city; in 2015, the City of Ottawa discovered that 6,825 individuals had accessed an emergency shelter, meaning that sustainable services surrounding homelessness are a necessity (City of Ottawa, n.d). In addition to this, ACORN Canada discovered that between 2005-2015, median rental prices have increased by 26%, whereas median income has only increased by 4% (ACORN Canada, 2018). Although there is no clear data on the number of yearly evictions in Ottawa, the

case of HeronGate in 2018 is an excellent example of the necessity for reliable housing support as nearly 400 tenants-- many of whom were of a racialized or immigrant backgrounds-- were forcibly removed from their homes in order for the establishment of a new Timbercreek Communities development (Cocullo, Gergyek & Goodman, 2018). These factors do provide a strong case for the successfulness of EPIC in the Ottawa context.

Additional material

Summary report

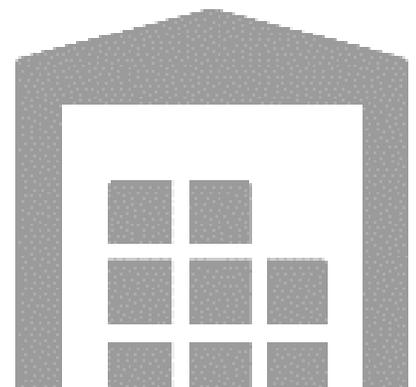
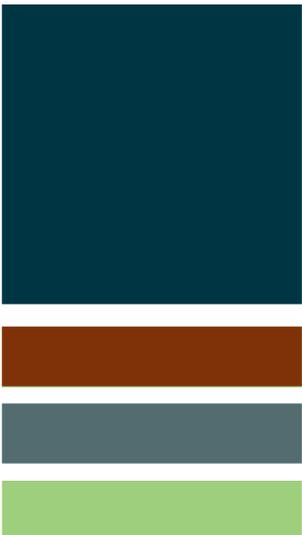
https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/8ea4-EPIC_Summary_Report_AODA.pdf

Client eligibility and referral process

https://www.tdin.ca/res_documents/EPIC%20client%20eligibility%20and%20referral%20process.pdf

Case worker description

<https://www.agincourtcommunityservices.com/job/eviction-prevention-case-worker>



2

Family Shelter Diversion Pilot

Waterloo

The Family Shelter Diversion Pilot: developing a new approach to serving families in the Housing Stability system” was launched, as part of the Housing Stability Strategy called All Roads Lead to Home.



Approach & Target

Audience

In 2013, the pilot project “Family Shelter Diversion Pilot: developing a new approach to serving families in the Housing Stability system” was launched, as part of the Housing Stability Strategy called All Roads Lead to Home. It was delivered in partnership with the Cambridge Shelter Corporation, Lutherwood Housing Services, and YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo.

Consistent with the Housing First approach endorsed by the local strategy, the Ending Family Homelessness Report focused on the goal of ending family homelessness. At the core of this approach was the idea that shifts were required in all community systems including the local housing stability system.

Definition of diversion

Emergency shelter diversion is the practice of supporting people seeking access to shelter by providing dedicated support to help them stay in their current housing or to find somewhere else that is safe and appropriate – even temporarily – until a more permanent housing option can be secured.

The Five Pathways

The pilot included five service pathways:

Housing Help:

For families seeking access to emergency shelter – but not immediately requiring a stay. This was a “light” level of housing support that included problem solving to resolve their housing crisis.

Family Diversion:

For families seeking access to emergency shelter within seven days. A “light” level of housing support that included problem-solving and access to a flex fund.

Family Diversion Plus:

For families seeking access to shelter that needed short term “transitional” support to fully resolve their housing crisis (e.g., community-based support such as accompaniment to viewings, home visits). Also included access to a flex fund. What is diversion? Emergency shelter diversion is the practice of supporting people seeking access to shelter by providing dedicated support to help them stay in their current housing or to find somewhere else that is safe and appropriate – even temporarily – until a more permanent housing option can be secured.

Emergency Shelter Stay:

For families experiencing homelessness with no other safe and appropriate housing options. Two types of emergency stays were available:

- o Rapid Re-Housing: For families who entered the shelter with a Housing Plan that suggested they could exit within 30 days.
- o Regular Shelter: For families with greater housing barriers and/or whose depth of need suggested that their stays may be longer than 30 days.

Intensive Support:

For families that were unable to retain their housing after receiving one or more of the above housing-based interventions

because they required more intensive support (with no specific time limit).

Funding Model

The RRAP fund was an effective tool that offered families flexible resources to help them remain housed, transition to new housing without a shelter stay and/or reduce the number of days spent in shelter. From October 2013 to March 2014, \$13,041 was spent (19 families). With the region-wide expansion in 2014/15, RRAP Fund expenses increased to \$48,424 (56 families). The total amount accessed through the Pilot was \$61,465. On average, each family accessed \$819 (\$720 in 2013/14 and \$865 in 2014/15).

The RRAP Fund was used to cover a variety of costs, where no other sources of funding were available. These included (in alpha order):

- Bed bug support
- Beds and mattresses (after attempting to secure donations first)
- Credit checks (\$20 processing fee passed from the landlord to the tenant)
- First and last month rent (where Rent Fund was unavailable)
- Food vouchers and grocery cards
- Household goods
- Key deposits
- Moving costs
- Rent arrears (where Rent Fund was unavailable or to cover costs of historical arrears)
- Rental application fees
- Storage
- Transportation (bus tickets, gas cards)
- Utility arrears (where Waterloo Region Energy Assistance Program was unavailable)

Results:

Between October 2013 and March 2015, 524 families (with 841 children) were served:

- 48% reduction in the number of families accessing shelter
- 48% reduction in average length of stay (42 days in 2012 to 22 days in 2014/15)
- Reduction in proportion of shelter stays and bed nights:
 - From 38% (2012) to 14% in 2014/15.
- 97% reduction in motel overflow costs
- They also received more seamless service:
 - 60-70% of families were supported to move to market rent housing.
- 40% of families were referred to another appropriate housing program or community agency
- The average cost to serve a family was reduced through the pilot by 68%

Lessons learned:

Families and Housing Stability:

- Safety screening and incorporating safety planning into the process was important for supporting overall family stability and well-being

Importance of communication:

- Many parents were not aware of their options for resolving their housing crisis beyond simply accessing shelter
- Changing the culture of access to resources requires lots of focus on communication with staff and families

System navigation:

- System-level barriers prevented housing retention for some families more often than affordability issues
- Many families required support with their current or potential new landlords
- Relationship building to help with system navigation

3

Collaborative Partnerships to Create Affordable Housing Stock Toronto, ON

This collaborative partnership between private sector corporations and the City of Toronto has created new, integrated housing stock with affordable rent.

Program description

The provision of new housing stock available at truly affordable rates can be seen as an intervention at the prevention stage of the homelessness journey map. This initiative is a collaborative effort among WoodGreen Foundation, Daniels Corporation, Sun Life and the City of Toronto and was announced February 12, 2021.

SunLife is the landowner; Daniels Corporation is the builder; Daniels Corp and Sun Life are building owner partners; Gateway Corporation will become the property manager.

WoodGreen will operate under a Head Lease agreement with Daniels Corporation and will select and place tenants in the rent-gear-to-income component of the development, including, but not limited to, graduates of the WoodGreen Homeward Bound program.

Affordability of 10% of the 340 units within the building has been achieved largely through a tripartite partnership among the City of Toronto, Sun Life Corp., and Daniels Corp. Under the terms of this agreement the City of Toronto has provided a property tax exemption for the building (\$ 740K over 40 years) and has also contributed to reducing construction costs through a

Capital Grant (\$ 5.1 Million, obtained through the Province of Ontario).

As noted above, the plan calls for 10% of units to be constructed to be rented through WoodGreen to rent geared to income tenants, thereby creating a mixed-use building with a significant component of truly affordable housing, offered at about 40 - 50% of current market rent levels for the building and at about 80% of CMHC average rental levels for Toronto for a period of 40 years. A mix of one-, two- and three-bedroom units will be available, scattered throughout the building. The market rental rate for a 2-bedroom unit is \$2,550 monthly; a Woodgreen unit of the same size will rent for \$1,270 monthly. 3 - bedroom units carry a market rate of \$3,300 monthly compared to a monthly rent of \$1,410 for a Woodgreen tenant – truly affordable, long-term housing.

The cost to the City of Toronto of the affordable units delivered in this project is estimated by may be less than providing additional Toronto Housing Corporation units. This project is indicative of a shift in government and industry mentality to recognise the importance of partnering to relieve the current and anticipated supply gaps within the City and to provide affordable housing now as opposed to 5 or 7 years hence.

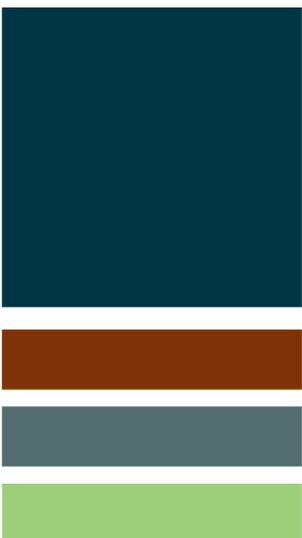
Partnering with WoodGreen to supply ancillary social services and other programming as needed for rent geared to income tenants, lowers the risk of problem tenancies to acceptable levels. Subsidies provided by the City of Toronto to make rental rates affordable are likely lower than the costs of maintaining these same families in shelters. The partnership provides sustainable and affordable long-term rent geared to income housing in a mixed-use complex.

From the WoodGreen perspective, piggybacking on the equity of Sun Life and

Daniels allows the provision of affordable housing without the necessity of being the housing manager. This perspective might well be shared by the City of Toronto, particularly if the net costs are less than those incurred in providing City-owned social housing units.

In a press release announcing the project, this initiative is described as a “partnership approach (that) can be replicated by the development industry to shorten the time frame for making new, affordable homes available throughout the City of Toronto.

WoodGreen Foundation has raised about 50% of its \$20 million target from donors. \$5 million of this total will go to scaling up the Homeward Bound program as described in another Promising Practices document associated with this Lab. \$10 million will be allocated to housing stock creation in collaboration with Daniels Corporation, other builders and social agency and government partners in Toronto.



4

HOMeward BOUND – WOODGREEN FOUNDATION

Toronto, ON

The Eviction Prevention in the Community program (EPIC) was established under the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) division, with the goal of mitigating citizen evictions in the city.



Approach & Target

Audience

The intervention Point is women living in women's or homeless shelters.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- 19 Years or Older
- Risk and/or History of Homelessness
- Canadian Citizen, Landed Immigrant, or Convention Refugee
- One Referral (from shelter, clergy, social program, etc.)
- Child(ren) are under 17 years old and at least one child living with the mother
- Maximum number of children is three
- High school diploma preferred
- Capable of reaching college level academic within 4-6 months
- On or eligible to OW, ODSP, or EI
- Able to participate in a full-time program
- No current criminal proceedings or addictions (one year sobriety)

Program description

WoodGreen is one of the largest non-municipal providers of affordable housing in Toronto –owning & providing service at 15 housing sites, and also provides services at several TCHC housing locations. Homeward Bound is a 4 - year wrap-around program that helps homeless or inadequately housed single mothers achieve lasting economic self-sufficiency. This is not just a housing program, rather it is a career program designed to provide full support to single mother families during the learning and employment seeking phases of career development.

Homeward Bound empowers mothers to overcome the barriers that impede their ability to find jobs. It creates opportunity and is truly ending a generational cycle of poverty.

With little in the way of education or employable skills, many homeless single mothers find themselves and their children without any real options. They share a sense of vulnerability, isolation and hopelessness. Piloted by WoodGreen and unique in Canada, Homeward Bound is an innovative four-year wrap around program to help inadequately housed or homeless, mother-led families earn college diplomas, start careers, and achieve economic self-sufficiency. Homeward Bound opens doors, provides training, education and housing, creating a pathway to independence and family security. Throughout a four-year, holistic program, women and their children live at WoodGreen's campus in safe, affordable and modern furnished apartments. Through Homeward Bound, the women have access to a tuition-paid college diploma as well as onsite child care and after school programming and tutoring for their children. The mothers also receive financial literacy training, psychotherapy, trauma and family counselling, and parenting support. By eliminating barriers one by one, Homeward

Bound allows these mothers to focus on their family, getting an education and ultimately securing a career.

What is the group we are dealing with?

Homeward Bound seeks to change the conditions that lead to intergenerational poverty, conscientiously eliminating barriers and supporting single mothers in building on their own strength and resilience so that they can gain employment with family-sustaining wages and move out of poverty for the long-term. In the last five years, 78 single mothers have graduated Homeward Bound having completed four years of intensive programming, including earning a college degree. In addition, 20 women began the program but withdrew before completing, and 11 women began the program but were discharged before completing, resulting in a program completion rate of 72%.

Developed for single mothers and their children, living in shelters or precariously housed. To date, Toronto's Homeward Bound has served **317 women and 486 children**, and the majority of these mother-led families are **fleeing violent situations** (appx 80%).

Services

- Key is **intensive case management** and **wrap-around programming**
- Focus on empowerment, independence & sustainable **economic stability**
- Changes the destiny for the mothers and their children

WoodGreen has recently added a program element focused on the children who enter their program. Most are placed into Special Ed classes as a result of moving so often from school to school. Tutoring is now provided with the result that almost all of the children have caught up to classmates of their age and are now enrolled in normal classrooms and programs.

Types of tools used

1. Women & their children live in affordable 2- or 3-bedroom units at the Homeward Bound campus
2. On-site childcare, tutoring and afterschool programming for children and youth
3. Tuition for a two-year college education
4. "Cohort Model" that pairs new arrivals for mutual support throughout program
5. Career track internships & career support postgraduation
6. Goal-oriented case management, parenting support, psychotherapy and trauma counselling

Who needs to be involved?

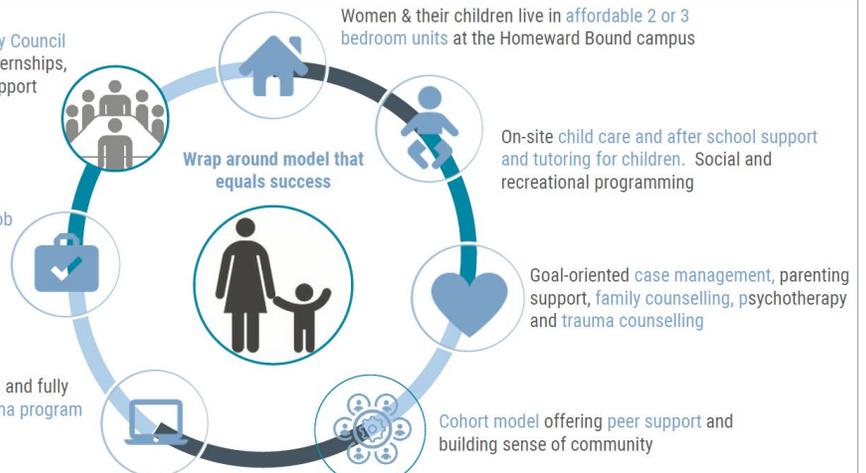
Key participants include WoodGreen's extensive staff, the WoodGreen Foundation, and the Industry Council. As steward of the Program, the Industry Council is committed to supporting the successful transition to work of Homeward Bound participants by providing appropriate job training internships and placement opportunities within their

WOODGREEN'S HOMEWARD BOUND

Supported by an active Industry Council for labour market guidance, internships, mentoring and employment support

Internships, career counselling, job preparation, hard and soft skills training and post graduation support

Academic and skills upgrading and fully funded two-year college diploma program education



- Ambassador & Advocate

Evidence of effectiveness

Since its inception Homeward Bound has consistently received positive feedback from graduating participants, and preliminary assessments of the program’s impact from 2005 to 2007 suggested that up to 80% of participants gain employment after graduation. In 2017, Constellation Consulting Group worked with WoodGreen to analyze the social value created by the program using basic Social Return on Investment (SROI) techniques. The 2017 SROI analysis by Constellation Consulting suggested that the program is creating at least \$6 for every dollar Invested, and likely greater.

Homeward Bound Graduates are Employed, Empowered Women.

94% of survey respondents were unemployed upon intake.
88% of survey respondents are currently employed, on maternity leave or in school.

Homeward Bound Graduates are Earning Family Sustaining Salaries.

86% of respondents were accessing social assistance at intake, with an average income of **\$11,645** per year.
\$43,000 per year is the average salary reported by survey respondents who are employed full-time.

Homeward Bound Graduates are Living in Safe and Secure Housing.

46% of respondents were living in a women’s shelter or homeless shelter at intake.
94% of respondents are currently living in stable housing.
8% of respondents now own their own home.

Education

68% of respondents had Grade 12 or less as their highest level of educational at intake.

100% of the Homeward Bound graduates have completed a college diploma program in fields such as business, early childhood education, networking/IT, legal assistance or human resources.
 Homeward Bound children have moved from Special Education streams into regular school programs.

Graduates to Date – 317 Women and 486 children

Homeward Bound now has 4 affiliate programs operating in Halton Hills, Peterborough, Brantford and Brockville. There is also an indigenous consulting component (to be expanded).

Costing information:

Estimated at about \$20,000 per participant per year. This is just over half of the cost of emergency housing provision in hotels or motels estimated at about \$3,000 monthly. Most of these costs are for case management, tuition fees and program evaluation.

Expenses by Program

- Supported Independent Living - 38%
- Supporting Healthy Families - 20%
- Building Stronger Communities - 17%
- Breaking the Cycle of Poverty - 14%
- Administration - 11%



5

Families First

Ottawa

Families First is a housing stabilization program for families emerging from homelessness. The team visits the family for up to 9 months helping them connect with the services they need.



Approach & Target

Audience

Families first is a city wide housing stabilization program run out of the Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre. It works with families, referred by City of Ottawa Housing Services, who are emerging from homelessness and remain vulnerable to becoming homeless again. The Families First Team visits families in their own homes for up to nine months helping every member of the family connect with the services they need and connect to their neighbourhood.

Family First's goals are to help families

- keep and maintain their housing following a housing placement and referral from the Family Shelter Services by a City of Ottawa case worker
- Integrate into their communities and promote social inclusion.
- Increase their autonomy and support self-sufficiency.

Program description

Families first has been in existence since 2011. From its inception the program has provided services to 2238 families. About 50% of the families in the families first program have been in Canada less than 5 years. Families may be experiencing

homelessness for the first time or have experienced periods of chronic homelessness. While the program offers its services to indigenous families many of indigenous families seek services from organizations specialized in providing services to indigenous peoples. Clients of the Catholic Centre for Immigration (CCI) shelters and the YM/YWCA are followed by case workers associated with those programs however the Families First Program does receive some referrals from YM/YWCA.

The Families First program offers support to families for up to 9 months through a team approach, families have a dedicated case manager that oversees the support, but depending on the family's needs and acuity may access specialist support from many members of the team. The program helps the family settle in to their new housing, connect with services that are needed, manage landlord relations and integrate into the neighbourhood. Clients are taken on following a referral from City of Ottawa staff once a family has permanent housing either through Social Housing or market rental.

Families First employs a client centered, strength-based approach in which the client participates actively. The program is delivered in 3 phases with each phase lasting approximately 3 months:

- The first phase which is most intensive looks to assess the need for specialized services for each family member establish the client's goals and build a plan;
- The second phase connects clients to services and providing training on tenant responsibilities and rights and how to interact with the landlord; and,
- The third and lighter touch phase focus on integrating into the community.

Families First case workers will provide assistance and support to resolve or mediate difficulties with landlords or neighbors to maintain tenancy and work to build skills that fosters client resiliency. By the end of the program clients are usually able to handle landlord interactions on their own, access services in their community and are integrating into their neighbourhood.

Organization and staff

Families First currently employs 6 housing base case managers, a multi-cultural case manager, mental health and addictions case manager, 4 child and youth case managers, a survivors of domestic violence case manager, a team lead, a program manager and an administrative assistant. Staff work out of the organizations offices on Richmond Road providing service to all areas of the city. Staff visit clients in their homes and provide service to all family members. Staff speak 15 different languages (translators are employed when needed). In addition, Families First is increasingly providing services in the area of trauma support as clients may have experienced trauma in the country from which they came or experienced trauma during the journey into homelessness.

Collaboration with other organizations

In carrying out its mission Families First works closely with City of Ottawa, Housing Services (principle funder) as well as several other City Departments and other organizations the community. It is the City of Ottawa, Housing Services Branch that provides client referrals.

Measuring success

Families First reports Through the Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre. It reports quarterly on its activities using a series of key performance indicators (KPIs) which are forwarded to the city as part of its funding reporting.

Statistics relevant to the program's success include:

- Families referred to the program that have remained housed
 - Last reporting year (2019) - 99.6% of families retained housing (the program completes a 12 month follow up with clients, from

this follow up we are only aware of one family returning to shelter)

- Since inception - since we started implementing an evaluation tool to assess housing retention (12 month follow up) only 4 families have lost their housing. This is a 99.8% housing retention.
- Families referred to the program
 - in 2019 - 263
 - Since program commenced – 2,238
- Referrals to agencies (number of agencies)
 - In an average year 1,390 referrals are made to approximately 122 agencies.
- Contacts with clients in the last reporting year
 - On average the program has 11,870 contacts per year

Financing

Finances for the families first program comes from 2 funding streams, Home for Good, Provincial funding program and City of Ottawa Housing and Homelessness Investment Plan

Contacts

Louisa Cameron
Program Manager, Families First
Centre de santé communautaire Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre
[1365 Richmond Road, 2nd Floor](#) | 1365 chemin de [Richmond, 2e](#) étage, Ottawa ON K2B 6R7
(613) 820-4922 ext. /poste 3332
l.cameron@pqchc.com

Jennifer Kitcher
Team Lead, Families First
600-1355 Bank St.
613-220-4661
j.kitcher@pqchc.com



6

ADSUM for Women & Children

Halifax, NS

The Eviction Prevention in the Community program (EPIC) was established under the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA) division, with the goal of mitigating citizen evictions in the city.



Target Audience

Women and children with no place to live.

Program description

In 1983 the doors of Adsum House opened to women who had no place to live. At that time, there was a growing need to provide safety and shelter to women living on the street in Halifax (K'jipuktuk). The Sisters of Charity, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Christ Anglican Church, Grace United Church and St. Peter's Roman Catholic Parish worked together toward a goal of providing safe, secure shelter for women. In the years since the ribbon was cut, Adsum has provided shelter, programs and services to thousands of people. They have grown from one shelter to an organization that provides a range of housing options, programs and services.

Their name was legally changed to Adsum for Women & Children in 2004; they were previously known as the Association for Women's Residential Facilities.

Today, Adsum shelters and houses as many as 120 people each day and more than 300 persons in a year, at an Adsum location. Hundreds more are supported in the community, by the housing team, to find safe and affordable homes with ongoing services for stable housing, food,

clothing and connection. Adsum has a long history of working with marginalized individuals and families who experience poverty and homelessness. They know first-hand how poverty, systemic discrimination, gender inequality, racism, disabilities, and trauma intersect and create layered barriers to securing stable housing.

Adsum clients face diverse social and personal obstacles that include, but are not limited to; mental illnesses, lack of education, single-parenthood, addictions, and histories of trauma and violence. The folks they work with are managing complex life challenges, while negotiating systems that further contribute to their marginalization, such as criminal justice, community services, child protection, and immigration systems. Adsum works predominantly with women. Adsum also works with families, most of whom are women-led by single mothers. Women are more likely to be poor than men and are more vulnerable to homelessness and unstable housing. Women's homelessness is directly related to women's disproportionate experience of poverty, systemic discrimination, gender inequality, and violence.

What phase of homeless journey (prevention, diversion, sheltering, rehousing, sustaining housing)

The Diverting Families from Shelter program has grown and developed over the past year to work with more families and expand our scope of practice to meet the needs of the community.

When Adsum began the program, they were working with families staying in an emergency shelter. With the addition of the Diverting Families Housing Support Worker position they have been able to provide earlier interventions to families who are experiencing chronic homelessness and offer more eviction prevention services. They recognize that experiences with homelessness and extended stays in

emergency shelter have a lasting impact on children that can result in an increased risk of homelessness, mental health, unemployment, and addiction in adulthood.

Adsum's work continues after a family is housed to ensure that their tenancy is successful by providing support to build stability and routine. Adsum's social worker is able to refer families for mental health support, safety planning in cases of interpersonal violence, navigate community resources and advocate to child welfare agencies on behalf of parents.

Adsum hopes that this project is just the beginning of a shift. A shift in how we all think about... what a child should have to experience, what is okay, how we respond to families, what families should have to endure, building resilience and the cycles of trauma.

With a grant from the provincial government, Adsum for Women & Children is launching a new project to help women and families move away from domestic violence and toward stability.

Recently, Adsum was announced as one of eighteen community organizations and groups throughout Nova Scotia to receive grants from the provincial government to help prevent domestic violence and support victims and their families. With a \$75,000 grant, the Halifax organization is launching a new project called Unlocking Hope: A Housing First Approach to Supporting Survivors of Family Violence.

The Unlocking Hope project will see the development of a trauma-informed housing-first model — making two emergency apartments and formal trauma-informed programs available to women and families who have faced domestic violence. The two emergency apartments bring the total of emergency apartments that Adsum has available to its clients to eight. The apartments serve as immediate temporary housing for clients until they're able to find more permanent, long-term housing.

The new project is an “add-on” to a program the organization started in September 2017 called Diverting Families from Shelter to Home to get women with children “into direct housing quicker,” often starting them out with emergency apartments and then helping them move into apartments with long-term leases.

Adsum is expanding on this program because the need has grown so much. Adsum sees increased calls all the time from people who are trying to leave domestic violence. “They're living with friends, they're couch-surfing, they're living in cars or they're staying in very unsafe situations, so we need programs like this to be able to support people who want to get out of those unsafe situations of domestic violence.” Kathy McNab, fund development and communications officer for Adsum.

In the last fiscal year, Adsum had 110 calls for support from women and families for the Diverting Families program, McNab said, but was only able to help 51 of them find housing due to a low vacancy rate and lack of affordable housing options in Halifax. With this new grant making way for two more emergency apartments, she said Adsum is going to be able to quickly house more people in apartments that will be on hand and will be already furnished and ready to move people into.

The trauma-informed counselling and programs, which are led both by social workers and client support staff, but also peer-led, will also help women and children who have dealt with domestic violence “get beyond the trauma and move from that crisis to stability,” McNab said. She noted the Unlocking Hope project will also aim to help women and families reconnect with families, peers and their community.

“When you think about domestic violence, one of the big things that happens is the abuser disconnects them from their family and their friends, and we're trying to break that cycle of isolation and silence by helping people reconnect with their family, friends and their community and then



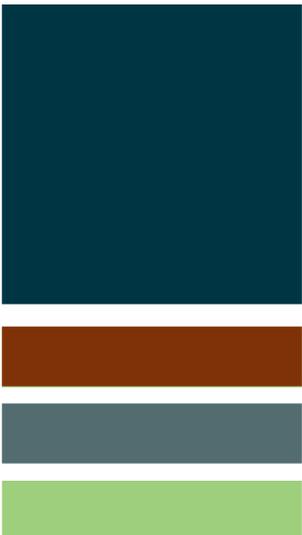
integrating them in the new community they're in," she said.

Intervention point:

The Intervention Points vary on a case-by-case basis. Previously, Adsum focused on women with children in emergency shelters. There are now no family shelters in Halifax, so children end up largely in women's emergency shelters. Adsum is trying, with great success, to intervene at the point of eviction to prevent children from being forced into emergency shelters. IN spite of their efforts, women are still losing custody of their children due to poverty.

Contact and organization referring the family

Homelessness is a Provincial responsibility in Nova Scotia, not a municipal one. Self-referral is the norm, but MLAs, lawyers, doctors and staff at agencies such as income assistance or child protection also play a role by contacting Adsum when emergency accommodation requirements arise.



7

Wabano's Housing Model

Ottawa, ON

Wabano is an Indigenous Centre for Excellence in Healthcare Services created by Indigenous people for Indigenous people. The Wabano team brings the knowledge of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people and cultures into one space that celebrates the resilience and beauty of unique indigenous communities. At Wabano, Indigenous people guide the path of their health and their healthcare.

Wholistic health is practiced from an Indigenous perspective that is centred in the belief that true health includes four aspects of wellbeing: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. At Wabano, there is a blend contemporary with traditional to find the balance for individuals and families.

As part of the full range of services, Wabano offers Housing Services.

The **Housing Team** creates a soft, gentle, safe place for clients to land. The team is equipped with the skills to offer a variety of services, no matter what place the client is in on the housing journey. Services include:

- Support finding housing and advocating with landlords
- Financial and rental income support (ODSP, Ontario Works)
- Mental Health/Addictions support
- Cultural activities
- Support in receiving high school diploma equivalent (GED)
- Employment readiness

Housing workers work with clients to:

- Help find housing for community members and support them to find services to meet their various needs in order to keep them housed, including helping find them financial aid, a stable food source, life skills programing, mental health and addiction supports, health care, furniture, clothing, social supports, cultural programming, employment etc.;
- Help with the housing search, including suggesting different housing options, viewing units, assisting with lease-signing, explaining the lease and rules in simple terms, etc.;
- Meet community members “where they are at” – whether on the street, in the shelter, or at a location where they feel comfortable;
- Create positive partnerships with team members, other Wabano workers, and community partners in order to best support client needs;

Promising Practices in the Wabano model

1. Co-ordination of Services

A Coordinated Access System (CAS) is a community-wide system that streamlines the process for people experiencing homelessness to access housing and supports.

- **Access to the System:** There is an established and agreed upon process and structure for intake that directs indigenous clients to the Centre
- **Common Assessment and Prioritization:** Wabano use an assessment process that is culturally sensitive and appropriate for indigenous communities and uses it establish mechanisms for determining which individuals will be prioritized for access to supports and housing
- **The Real-time data is the heart of the Coordinated Access System** and is being developed with the City and other community agencies. It will involve making the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) available to all agencies in the system.

Clients can receive a full range of services through Wabano, although clients may choose services from other providers and Wabano may refer cases to other indigenous providers based on client need. Case workers are specialized in working on different points of the journey but the Team stays connected to the client throughout the entire journey.

2. Flexible Application of Rules to Solve Problems

Wabano has introduced practices into its rent supplement program that have eliminated many of the barriers embedded in the City's program in working with the private market. Focus is on closing an arrangement with the landlord including excising flexibility in what the landlord is asking. This flexibly allows negotiating properties where rents are above city rent supplement ceilings. In practice this is most often small increases in the \$100 to \$150 range over city maximums.

When workers are focused on solutions and can make determinations about financial assistance and other supports to secure housing that is related to the actual rent to be paid taking into account the client's needs and ability to pay rather than constrained by a fixed maximum the number of placements can increase significantly as demonstrated during a recent housing blitz.

Additional resources:

Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
<https://wabano.com/>

Co-ordinated Access System
<https://caeh.ca/cas/>

8

Social Letting Agencies

Scotland, UK

Social lettings agencies are a hybrid model of a traditional renting agency or property manager, and an affordable housing provider. Social lettings agencies set their rents in line with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) (MMR-median market rents in Canada)

Program description

Social lettings agencies or “Local letting agencies” are a hybrid model of a traditional renting agency or property manager, and an affordable housing provider. Social lettings agencies set their rents in line with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) (MMR-median market rents in Canada) which are based on the 30% percentile in each Broad Market Rental Area (BMRA) – effectively making three out of every ten properties accessible to those in receipt of financial support relating to their housing.

Social lettings agencies work in a very similar way to a property manager in that:

- They source appropriate tenants for the landlord’s property
- They undertake all of the referencing, drawing up and executing of the tenancy agreement, and receiving and registering the security deposit
- Just as with a ‘full management’ service, they liaise directly with the tenant for any necessary repairs or statutory compliance checks, and undertake periodic inspections
- They manage the check-out process, including any deposit negotiation

In addition they also:

- Work in partnership with landlords to offer a comprehensive range of services such as guaranteed rent for the duration of the agent and landlord relationship, even during periods when the unit is vacant;
- Offer a leasing option whereby the landlord lets directly to the letting agent on a lease similar to a commercial lease, meaning that the letting agent will then take on some of the obligation and costs for internal repairs and statutory compliance;
- The leasing option then allows the rental property to become more of a passive income for landlord, which compares favourably to market rents in the medium term once the service offer is factored into the cost benefit analysis;
- Longer term leases between the landlord and agent which offer an unrivaled security of tenure for both the landlord and the tenant;
- Offer a unique blend of expertise, with team members having extensive experience in the Private Rented Sector, as well as, tenancy support and sustaining affordable tenancies; and,
- Enable the landlord to make a social impact; providing their tenants with a high quality, long term home for up to five years (or longer if the landlord renews). This supports the tenants by giving them a stable foundation from which they can build their lives and start to achieve their potential.

Funding Model

Funding for SLA comes from Local authorities, management fees and charitable contributions. Some SLAs have become self-sustaining based on management fees and housing portfolio composition of subsidized and market rate renting.

Origins and Growth

The first social letting agency was started in Glasgow Scotland by social innovator Susan Acktemel in 2013 under the banner Homes for Good. The innovation has spread quickly across Scotland, Wales, England , Northern Ireland and the republic of Ireland. By March of 2018 ninety-nine such agencies had been established. The Joseph Roundtree Foundation completed a review of the concept in June of 2018. <http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Scaling-up-social-lettings-FINAL.pdf>

Measuring success

The Roundtree report identifies several advantages including Social letting agencies:

- can draw on a range of different funding sources
- could help local authorities to discharge their obligations
- can enable better management of vacancies
- might be able to acquire their own property portfolios
- can cross-subsidise support for low-income or vulnerable tenants from commercial activity.

There were also barriers identified

- the gap between Local Housing Allowance rates and market rents, which has a major impact on SLAs' ability to attract landlords
- the local dynamics of the private rental market matter, which may make it difficult to scale out existing schemes into other neighbouring areas
- the distinctive mix of skills required to set up and develop an SLA.

The report concludes

SLAs have the potential to improve housing outcomes for low-income or vulnerable tenants while also offering a positive option for landlords. At present, the overall size of SLAs – individually and collectively – is small, and SLAs are not yet a substitute for systemic reform of the PRS. However, SLAs could make a considerable difference to the options available to specific groups, particularly homeless people.

Replication

A handbook for the Social Letting Agencies has been produced “**Local lettings agencies: a good practice guide**”

https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/236936/local_lettings_agency_guide_scotland.pdf

The handbook includes sections on the questions that should be addressed as part of local research. They include:

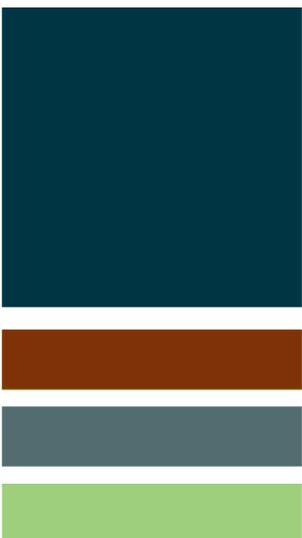
What to ask landlords and local landlords' associations?

What to ask local agents?

Are there any relevant case studies?

Are the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates adequate?

Is the client mix right? Is the local agent/landlord mix right?



WEBSITE

<http://www.rentsmartontario.ca/>

LOCATION

Ontario

DESCRIPTION

RentSmart Ontario provides education and support to tenants and landlords with the goal of successful tenancies. RentSmart provides education in legal rights and responsibilities, financial management, communication and maintenance skills.

RentSmart Ontario is part of a national initiative led by Ready to Rent BC and includes similar programs in BC, Alberta and Manitoba.

POPULATION SERVED

Originally inspired by a desire to find solutions for unstably housed and homeless families, RentSmart is available to anyone looking for rental housing.

SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

RentSmart Certificate

RentSmart Certificate is a 12-hour course that covers tenants rights and responsibilities, landlord responsibilities and expectations, living with roommates, housemates and neighbours, maintenance do's and don'ts, and more.

Graduates of the program receive a certificate that can be recognized as a reference on housing applications and lets landlords know they have taken the time to learn how to be a responsible tenant.

RentSmart Basics

RentSmart Basics covers key skills and knowledge to assist people to learn important tools to maintain healthy housing during a 3-hour program. Graduates of this program do not receive a certificate.

FUNDING & STAFF

RentSmart Ontario is funded in part by the Government of Canada Homelessness Partnering Strategy and Ontario Trillium Foundation.

RentSmart Ontario employs 3 staff members – Provincial Manager of Operations and Partnership Development, Provincial Trainer, and Program Coordinator.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

RentSmart Ontario measures its impact in a number of ways, including course intake and evaluation forms and facilitator feedback. In 2015, Ready to Rent BC, the program that inspired and launched RentSmart Ontario, released results from a participant survey. The following are the highlights of the outcomes achieved:

- 91% of participants mostly or always pay their rent on time and in full.
- 78% of participants somewhat agreed or fully agreed that the RentSmart certificate helped them find a place to rent.
- 86% of participants reported that maintaining their housing was easier as a result of the Ready to Rent course.

DESCRIPTION

A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a private non-profit corporation created to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a community and provide secure affordable access to land and housing for community residents.

CLTs offer a means of meeting the affordable housing and community development needs of low- to moderate-income households.

They acquire land in the community—either by purchasing land directly or through donations of land, land and buildings, or money to purchase land. This land is held in perpetuity so that it can always be used for affordable housing. Access to this land is often limited to low- and moderate-income households and the non-profit organizations that serve them^{ix}.

IN PRACTICE: CALGARY, AB

Population: 232,800

Vacancy rate: 3.9%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,315

In 2003, HomeSpace Society (formerly Calgary Community Land Trust Society) was created to grow capacity in the affordable housing sector and advance community-based planning and delivery of housing options.

HomeSpace is a charitable real-estate developer, rental housing owner and property manager. They own 521 units of housing and 27 properties in Calgary and provides homes to nearly 700 residents. Rent is maintained at 25-35% below market.

HomeSpace builds affordable, specialized, permanent housing for vulnerable Calgarians and works with partners to provide supports for those in need of housing^x.

IN PRACTICE: HAMILTON, ON

Population: 536,900

Vacancy rate: 3.4%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,797

The Hamilton Community Land Trust (HCLT) formed in 2014 and works with residents and community partners to identify and facilitate real estate projects that are sustainable and affordable. They focus on projects that would make better use of underused land, and preserve or create new community assets, such as housing, parks, community space, work space, and gardens. They acquire and steward land on a permanent, non-profit basis to maintain affordability and community control.

In November 2017, the HCLT announced that they acquired possession of their first property – an empty plot in the downtown core. One year later, in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the HCLT is approaching the move in date for the single-family affordable housing unit.

ADVANTAGES

- Preserves the affordability of housing, regardless of market changes
- Can provide home ownership opportunities for those that would otherwise be locked out of the market

CHALLENGES

- CLTs are dependent on a sustainable business model to maintain affordable rental rates while covering ongoing operating costs.
- Municipal policies and zoning regulations may act as barriers to the start up of a CLT^{xi}.

DESCRIPTION

A density bonus is a zoning tool to permit density beyond what would normally be permitted. In exchange, developers deliver an amenity that benefits the community, such as affordable housing.

IN PRACTICE: BURNABY, BC

Population: 232,800

Vacancy rate: 2%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,715

The City of Burnaby, BC, uses a density bonus zoning framework called the Community Benefit Bonus (CBB) program. This program enables the City to allow developers or applicants to build additional density in exchange for providing a community benefit. A community benefit is defined as one of the following:

1. A community amenity, such as major public open space, public art, child care facilities, space for non-profits, etc.
2. Affordable and/or special needs housing, such as guaranteed rental units, units controlled or managed or owned by non-profit housing groups, etc.
3. A cash contribution in lieu of – a contribution made to the City by a developer and allocated exclusively for the future provision of a community amenity and/or affordable and/or special needs housing.

Since the introduction of the CBB program in 1997, an array of community amenities and housing units have been achieved, including child care centres, units of affordable housing, and housing fund grants to support affordable and/or special need housing.

IN PRACTICE: NEW WESTMINSTER, BC

Population: 71,000

Vacancy rate: 1.6%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,765

Density bonusing in New Westminster, BC means that in designated zones, a developer can build to a higher density if a community amenity contribution is provided to the municipality. Only development projects in density bonus zones are eligible for density bonusing.

The amenity contributions collected from Density Bonus Amenity Zoning are allocated as follows: 30% towards affordable housing, 10% towards childcare, 10% towards public art, and 50% towards general amenities (i.e. civic facilities, park space, public art, etc.).

ADVANTAGES

- Incentive – allows developers to achieve greater uses from their land while creating a benefit for the community
- Transparent – information and requirements are clearly laid out within a bylaw
- Consistent and predictable – all development is required to comply with the same bylaw and contribute equitably to future growth

CHALLENGES

- Analysis of density bonusing suggests that increased density alone is not enough of an incentive to provide affordable housing^{xii}.
- If developers are unable to find viable development options because of restrictive or overly demanding density bonusing standards, they may choose not to enter the local market. As a result, the number of housing starts within a local municipality may decline^{xiii}.

DESCRIPTION

Designed as a local regulatory tool, inclusionary zoning requires developers to include a number of affordable homes in new residential developments over a certain size. Affordable units may target particular income groups or serve a range of incomes. Additionally, the resale price of the affordable units is restricted for a number of years^{xiv}.

New inclusionary zoning regulations came into effect in Ontario in April 2018 that allow municipalities to mandate that affordable housing units are included in new housing developments^{xv}.

IN PRACTICE: LANGFORD, BC

Population: 35,000

Vacancy rate: 0.7%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,565

Langford's progressive and successful "inclusionary zoning requirement" program won the 2008 Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Award. The program allows a choice between providing a \$1,000 contribution for every single family equivalent dwelling unit created by rezoning to the City's Affordable Housing Reserve Fund or constructing one new affordable home for every 15 single-family lots subdivided. Council uses the contributions to the Reserve Fund strategically to provide grants to new non-profit housing projects within the City^{xvi}.

The program has resulted in the development of 40 single family dwellings and 8 multi-family condo units. These existing homes come up for resale periodically and the City maintains a waitlist of qualified buyers.

IN PRACTICE: MONTREAL, QC

Population: 1.8 million

Vacancy rate: 1.9%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,009

In 2004, Montreal introduced a new benchmark commitment as part of its Master Plan. The City formally committed to making 30% of all new units affordable, half in social housing and half by the private sector through government incentives. The strategy applies to developments of 200 or more units.

The affordable housing obligation can be met through new construction, or renovation of existing non-residential structures.

ADVANTAGES

- Production of affordable housing at little cost to local government
- Creation of mixed-income communities

CHALLENGES

- Mandatory inclusionary zoning can result in resistance from developers and costs associated with enforcement.
- Voluntary inclusionary zoning requires considerable incentives for developers to participate^{xvii}

DESCRIPTION

A secondary suite policy can encourage the creation of accessory units. Secondary suites are typically a self-contained living space located within or on the same property as a single-family home. They're often referred to as basement units, upper-level suites, or in-law suites.

Requiring units be registered with the municipality ensure the suites have obtained all necessary permits and have been inspected to meet health and safety requirements.

IN PRACTICE: CALGARY, AB

Population: 1.2 million

Vacancy rate: 4.9%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,315

City approvals are required to build a secondary suite or backyard suite. Suites are only allowed within certain land use districts. Units must demonstrate that they meet fire code and building code requirements and a building permit fee is required^{xviii}.

The City hosts a secondary suite registry that is an online, searchable list identifying legal and safe secondary suites in Calgary. These suites have been registered and inspected to meet Alberta's safety code requirements^{xix}.

Illegal secondary suite owners can be charged under the Safety Codes Act for code deficiencies. A conviction under the Safety Code Act carries a maximum fine of \$100,000 for a first offence^{xx}.

IN PRACTICE: KELOWNA, BC

Population: 127,400

Vacancy rate: 1.9%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,386

The City of Kelowna allows secondary suites in most residential zones other than townhomes and multi-family complexes. A building permit is required to create a new secondary suite and units must meet certain requirements, including parking, fire safety, and building code conditions.

Secondary units are considered illegal if they were constructed without the appropriate building permit. Once notified of an illegal secondary suite, an owner must decommission the illegal suite or obtain the appropriate permits and updates to legalize the suite.

ADVANTAGES

- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing
- Increase affordability of home ownership
- Provide more housing while retaining neighbourhood character^{xxi}

CHALLENGES

- Costs associated with bringing secondary units into compliance with building and safety codes
- Increase people-to-space density

DESCRIPTION

Sometimes called a Housing Trust Fund or Housing Reserve Fund, housing funds are distinct funds established to receive dedicated public revenues, which can only be spent on housing.

The key characteristic of a housing fund is that it receives ongoing revenues from dedicated source of public funding, such as taxes. However, sources of funds can also include gaming funds, land sales, development levies, and more.

IN PRACTICE: LONDON, ON

Population: 383,800

Vacancy rate: 4.2%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,221

London, ON, has an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to provide capital grants on a per unit basis to eligible partners to assist in the development of affordable permanent housing for individuals and families in deep core housing need, and transitional housing.

Reserve Funds are intended to supplement funding or in-kind supports provided by senior levels of government, service providers, community organizations, etc.

To ensure that the Reserve Funds are being used to meet the needs of those least able to find accommodation, affordability criteria must be met. For transitional units, this means that rents to be charged will not exceed the maximum shelter allowance provided under Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program. For affordable rental projects, rent levels are set annually at 70% or below average market rent^{xxii}.

IN PRACTICE: COQUITLAM, BC

Population: 139,300

Vacancy rate: 1.0%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,732

Coquitlam, BC, has an Affordable Housing Reserve Fund. Monetary contributions are provided through some development applications and an annual contribution from the City's General Revenue to build and sustain the Fund.

The Fund is used to acquire land and make it available for lease at a low cost and/or reduce or waive development fees and charges in order to support affordable housing. The Fund is targeted to projects that supply affordable housing for low- and moderate-income family and single person households^{xxiii}.

ADVANTAGES

- Designed locally to take advantage of unique opportunities and address specific needs that exist within a community.
- Establishes a clear role for the municipality in contributing to development of affordable housing.
- Provides flexibility to contribute to projects as they arise.

CHALLENGES

- Depending on the amount committed and the means in which funding is collected, it can take a significant amount of time to build a balance substantial enough to make an impact.

DESCRIPTION

Demolition policies are typically aimed at heritage conservation but can also relate to the protection of affordable housing. A demolition policy requires the replacement of rental accommodation during the redevelopment of a site, or the protection of deed restricted units from demolition^{xxiv}.

IN PRACTICE: PORT MOODY, BC

Population: 33,550

Vacancy rate: 3.9%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,855

Port Moody introduced a Rental Protection Policy in 2018, designed to discourage any elimination of affordable market and sub-market rental housing by giving preference to redevelopment applications that achieve at least one-to-one, like-for-like replacement of existing stock.

For the replacement of existing affordable housing, preference is first given to proposals that seek to retain part or all of existing rental buildings on site, while adding in new infill development. Where opportunities for onsite maintenance, renovation, and restoration have been exhausted, rental redevelopment proposals may be considered based on a set of criteria, including ensuring units are affordable to low- to moderate-income households^{xxv}.

The policy does not apply to secondary rental stock, including secondary suites, laneway homes, individually rented condo units etc.

IN PRACTICE: SURREY, BC

Population: 517,900

Vacancy rate: 0.4%

Avg. rent 3 bedroom: \$1,344

In 2018, the City of Surrey adopted the policy Rental Housing Redevelopment: Rental Replacement and Tenant Relocation Assistance. This policy sets out the requirements for redevelopment of purpose-built rental housing and provision of assistance to tenants when redevelopment occurs.

Replacement of purpose-built rental sites requires replacement of existing rental units within the new development and are required to be 'affordable rental' for low to moderate income households.

In addition, a tenant relocation plan and assistance must be provided. The plan must include financial compensation, relocation assistance, and right of first refusal to rent a unit in the redevelopment^{xxvi}.

ADVANTAGES

- Prevents the loss of existing purpose-built rental housing and strengthens protection for tenants

CHALLENGES

- Does not protect units included in the secondary rental market

Rapid Rehousing

U.S.A²

Rapid re-housing is an intervention that helps homeless families exit shelters and get back into permanent housing quickly, provides short-term help with housing expenses (e.g., rent arrears, ongoing rent assistance, moving costs) and case management focused on housing stability.



Approach & Target Audience

Rapid re-housing is a relatively new but, as early evidence shows, promising strategy that communities across the country are adopting. The emphasis on rapid re-housing represents a significant shift in the response to family homelessness toward a Housing First philosophy.

The intervention has low barriers to entry, high placement rates, and low rates of return to shelter. No clear model for the intervention has emerged. Rapid re-housing has many local variations, and is more of an approach than a specific model, which makes replication and scaling difficult, as it is most certain that implementation matters. Further, it is not clear which components of rapid re-housing are critical to achieving success.

In the case of the California study:

Housing placements are high: 82% of families exiting CBRR found permanent housing after two years in the program (HUD2013).

Rates of Return to homelessness are low: Only 10% exiting these programs returned to homelessness (HUD2013).

Reliance on Housing Vouchers Decreased: The proportions of the CBRR families using any permanent housing subsidy are about 6 percentage points lower than the corresponding proportions for the UC families in months 6 to 14

School-life Improvements for children: While there wasn't enough evidence to conclude that participation in the CBRR group improved childhood overall - placement did increase school conduct & decreased number of overall absences from school

Rapid rehousing does not reduce the other considerations around poverty

Employment gains are modest at best: After 12 months into the program, employment gains only increased 11% from 34% to 45%.

Residential Instability remains high: While most families did not return to homelessness, 76% of families did move at least once during the year after exiting the program.

Family-based challenges remain:

- *Food insecurity: 70% of families*
- *Rent insecurity: 57% of families*
- *Child behavioural problems: 14% of families*
- *Deteriorating health: 17% of families*

Little improved impact over the long term compared to UC: At 20 months after random assignment, assignment to the CBRR group did not affect housing stability, family preservation, or adult well-being compared with assignment to the UC group.

² <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/54201/2000265-Rapid-Re-housing-What-the-Research-Says.pdf>

RAPSIM: Réseau d'aide aux personnes seules et itinérantes de Montréal

Montreal, QC

RAPSIM brings together community organizations to help homeless and those at risk of homelessness to find accommodation resources, social housing, social support such as getting mental health and addiction support, and more social services such as these



Approach & Target Audience

The target is homeless people and those who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Approach: Brings together community organizations to help homeless and those at risk of homelessness to find accommodation resources, social housing, social support such as getting mental health and addiction support, and more social services such as these. The approach for this initiative is team based, with the three levels of government being involved, and having open communication between the team, board of directors, and those affected by homelessness.

The concept of a bottom-up approach helps organizations to have a better understanding of why people are struggling with homelessness.

There are more conversations happening between the homeless and those who strive to help them, which allows these organizations to develop specific strategies that can target specific circumstances of the homeless in the area.

Due to the many actors (different levels of government, multiple organizations), sometimes it can be difficult to come to an agreed upon consensus regarding how best to deal with a specific issue.

Best Practices:

1. Collaborative effort, ensuring that all voices are heard
2. Works with homeless people to understand their individual needs from a bottom-up approach
3. Many voices of diverse organizations are heard to obtain a better range of ideas and aid

Danish National Housing Strategy (DNHS)

Denmark

This strategy uses 3 best practices: Critical Time Intervention (**CTI**)³, Intensive Case Management (**ICM**)⁴, and assertive Community Treatment (**ACT**)⁵.



Approach & Target Audience

The DNHS's framework utilizes three best practices in addressing homelessness in Denmark: Critical time intervention (**CTI**)⁶, intensive case management (**ICM**)⁷, and assertive community treatment (**ACT**)⁸.

CTI: is a time-limited evidence-based practice for addressing homelessness that facilitates services with a community-based approach. Through ensuring strong community ties during recovery, integration into homes is more successful.

ICM: is a team-based approach to supports individuals through a case management approach. The goal of ICM is to help clients maintain their housing and achieve an optimum quality of life through developing plans, enhancing life skills, addressing health and mental health needs.

ACT: Provides intensive treatment, rehabilitation and support services for individuals with serious mental illness and complex needs who find it difficult to engage in other mental health services. The goal is to support these individuals in their recovery and their desire to live in the community.

Danish National Housing Strategy Application Review:

- In 2018, **ICM** was offered by 19 municipalities (Socialstyrelsen, 2018c). If it is easily accessible and flexible, the evaluations have shown that ICM is very successful as an intensive recovery and empowerment-based method (Benjaminsen et al., 2017).
- The **CTI** method was used in the homelessness strategy project by 13 municipalities, with 284 people; and in the implementation and institutionalisation project in 24 municipalities, with 56 people. The evaluations found that 88% were still in their home at the end of the homelessness strategy project, and 96% in the case of the implementation and institutionalisation project (see, respectively, Rambøll and SFI, 2013a; Benjaminsen et al.,2017).

³ <https://www.criticaltime.org/cti-model/>

⁴ <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/supports/intensive-case-management-icm-teams>

⁵ <https://toronto.cmha.ca/programs-services/assertive-community-treatment-act-teams/>

⁶ <https://www.criticaltime.org/cti-model/>

⁷ <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/supports/intensive-case-management-icm-teams>

⁸ <https://toronto.cmha.ca/programs-services/assertive-community-treatment-act-teams/>

- The evaluations of ACT in the homelessness strategy project and in the Housing First implementation and institutionalisation project found that the two projects covered in total 63 persons, by far the smallest target group of the three support methods. 72% of the ACT group were men and none was aged 18-24

Policy Dynamics:

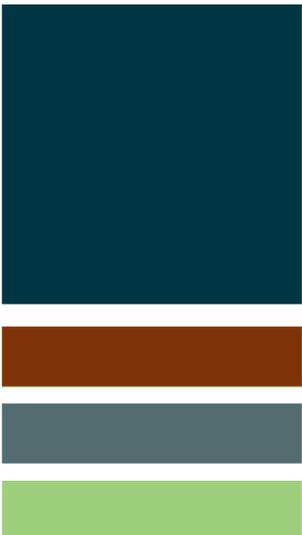
In order to determine whether or not the DNHS could be replicated in Canada, various policy dynamics need to be examined. Denmark is a constitutional monarchy (similar to Canada), with a unicameral parliament (not similar to Canada). Unlike in Canada where parliamentary majorities are fairly common, Denmark has not had a political party control the majority since 1909⁹; requiring significant consensus building. The structure of the two countries are similar, Denmark is divided into five (5) administrative regions with a total of 99 municipalities; Denmark's population is much smaller than Canada (approximately 5 million people) with a GDP per capita of ~\$60,000 USD (compared to \$46,000 USD for Canada).

Difficulties in application of DNHS:

1. Lack of affordable housing supply
 - The three implementation approaches used in the DNHS all address the interpersonal complexities of homelessness but fail to address the supply-side issue (lack of affordable housing).
2. Inability to navigate the system
 - The Danish government has acknowledged the necessity to employ system coordinators to help individuals experiencing homelessness access the services available to them.
3. Complexity of Administrative Structure
 - The DNHS is a federal approach to address homelessness that requires actions on the municipal level; therefore, there is an acknowledgement of the complexities associated with inter-governmental efforts to solve social issues.

Further Reading:

1. Nilsson, S.F et al. "Risk of Homelessness after Discharge from Psychiatric Wards in Denmark: a Nationwide Register-based Cohort Study." *Acta psychiatrica Scandinavica* 140.5 (2019): 477–489. Web.
2. Brandt, Preben. "Homelessness and Mental Illness in Denmark: Focus on 'Street-Dwellers.'" *International Journal of Mental Health: Homelessness and Mental Illness: Studies from Western Europe* 30.3 (2001): 84–92. Web.
3. Tan, Harry, and Helen Forbes-Mewett. "Whose 'fault' Is It? Becoming Homeless in Singapore." *Urban Studies* 55.16 (2018): 3579–3595. Web.



⁹ <https://denmark.dk/society-and-business/government-and-politics>



Lutherwood Housing Services

Waterloo and Wellington County, ON

Lutherwood is a progressive, not-for-profit health and social service organization providing mental health, employment and housing services to more than 19,600 people annually in Waterloo Region and Wellington County. The population of the Region is 600,000 making it roughly one half the size of Ottawa and, at the time of writing this report, the Waterloo region has only one homeless family.

Lutherwood's housing services support the search to find permanent, safe and affordable housing. They offer a range of services to help clients find and maintain housing including loans for rental deposits and arrears, service resolution, public education, training and information on housing.

Lutherwood helps families with a self-directed housing search to find and maintain affordable housing. This can also include a meeting with a Housing Advisor who can assess the family's needs for housing stability services including support to maintain and secure new housing through loan or grant options.

Lutherwood can provide:

- Support with a self-directed housing search
- [Intensive supports for families](#) to sustain their tenancy or find new housing
- Problem solving to stay in the housing that families currently have (eviction prevention)
- [Rent funds](#) to help with arrears or last month's rent deposit
- Landlord negotiation and mediation
- Referrals to housing stability programs
- Free access to computers, internet, phones and newspapers
- Links to [community resources](#)

Lutherwood Housing Support Services are offered on a drop-in basis with locations in [Kitchener and Cambridge](#).

Specific Programming

Families in Transition (FIT)

The Families in Transition (FIT) program is a medium to high intensity program that works with families with dependents under 25 years of age, who are seeking an emergency shelter stay because they are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness within 7 days.

Family Shelter Diversion and Rapid Re-Housing

FIT works in partnership with the YW Emergency Shelter. Acting as a single point of access, FIT Counsellors provide an intake service for families who are seeking emergency shelter in Waterloo Region. FIT recognizes that family homelessness and homeless shelters have both a short and long term negative impact on childhood development. The aim of FIT is to prevent and divert families from accessing Emergency Shelter whenever possible by supporting families to explore all safe and appropriate housing options in the community.

The focus of FIT is on supporting families to find sustainable housing in the community. Families are expected to be actively engaged in their housing plan, through a market rent housing search. Help is offered by FIT counsellors throughout the rapid re-housing process, out of homelessness and back into housing.

Within FIT, Lutherwood offers:

- Individualized and intensive housing support
- Free use of Resource area, including computers with internet access and phones
- Housing Information and resources
- Referrals to community resources

Behind the scenes, Lutherwood has two teams working with individuals experiencing chronic Homelessness in Waterloo Region who have a greater depth of need. The Prioritized Access to Housing Support (PATHS) team works with local housing stability system partners and others to provide coordinated access prioritizing housing offers and connecting participants to housing. Once housed, the Home-Based Service (HBS) team works intensively with individuals to help them maintain housing.

Rent Fund

Rent Fund for emergency assistance with last month's rent or rental arrears

Housing Advisors assist individuals and families to access the Rent Fund for last month's rent and rental arrears when rental emergencies come up and you are out of options.

Accessing the Rent Fund

An assessment is involved when accessing the Rent Fund for financial assistance. The documents below may be requested by the Housing Advisor to help with the assessment. If the client doesn't have these documents, possible alternatives may be suggested.

- ID
- Rental information (for example, lease or [Housing Verification Form](#))
- Proof of all incomes
- Proof of emergency or housing crisis
- Pre-authorized payment form or void cheque (if a loan is required)

*Additional documents may be required by the Housing Advisor in certain circumstances. It is important that the tenancy be sustainable based on the client's current budget in order for the Rent Fund to be considered as a possible option for either last month's rent or rental arrears requests. Rent Fund assists with tenancies that are only for those covered under the Rental Tenancies Act.

Rapid Rehousing Assistance Program (RRAP)

The RRAP Fund is a flexible client and circumstance – focused fund designed to supplement other programs either by increasing “Cap” limits or providing funds for goods and services not covered elsewhere but essential components for rapid rehousing success.

Some examples of costs that can be covered include: Increasing the Rent Fund Cap; utility hookup fees; utility arrears; furniture; home set up; moving trucks; food vouchers during the move; rent supplements to bridge application for and receipt of funds from programs such as the Child Tax Benefit.

AS part of its efforts to divert families from shelters, support for “couch surfing” is also offered, including food vouchers; utility bills support for the host of the family, etc. Transportation for viewing available apartments using buses or taxis is also available as part of the housing search process.

While this broad range of support might appear to be unaffordable by Municipalities, the average total support given per family in 2020 was in the area of \$1,000 per family housed for a total spend of about \$30,000.

Additional Resources:

<https://www.lutherwood.ca/housing/participant-handbook>

[http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/the-renter_s-toolkit.aspx](http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/the-renter-s-toolkit.aspx)

<https://www.lutherwood.ca/housing/support-services/rent-fund>

