

How Toronto's Shelter System Flow Data is Driving Change

Stephanie Malcher, Manager Coordinated Access

Wondu Amenu, Research Analyst, Coordinated Access

Shelter Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto





Background

What is Toronto's Shelter System Flow data?

- An aggregate report of people using shelter services in Toronto
- Developed in a collaboration between the City, the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB), and the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness (TAEH)
- Allows the City and community partners to publically measure progress towards achieving Toronto's vision of homelessness being **rare, brief and non-recurring**



Who

- People experiencing homelessness in the shelter system in the last three months
- Only need to have one night in shelter in the past three months to be included

How

- Data is collected in intake into, or discharge from, a shelter, 24-hour respite, warming centre, or hotel/motel shelter program
- Front-line staff enter information based on responses from people accessing services



Data overview

Dashboard details

- Two dashboards:
 1. The Monthly Snapshot shows current reporting month
 2. The Historical Trends highlights changes over time
- Users are able to filter data by sub-populations and specific time periods using the built-in filtering tools
- Dashboards are updated monthly on City's website
- Data is also available on the City's open data portal

Shelter System Flow: Monthly Snapshot

September, 2022

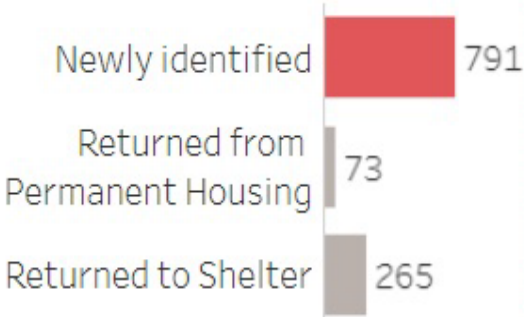
Shelter System Flow: Monthly Snapshot dashboard has 7 visualizations and 4 key performance indicators to comprehend monthly trends of shelter system flow across the city of Toronto.

People actively homeless in the last three months*: **9,690**

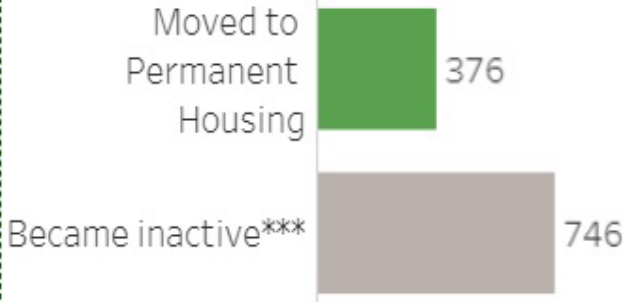
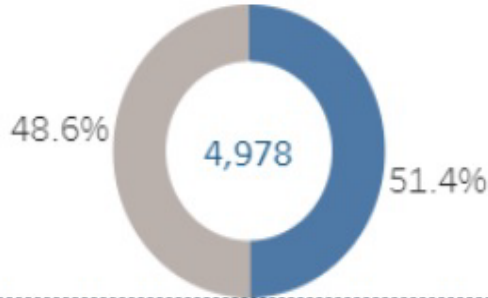
Shelter System Inflow in
September, 2022:
1,129

Change (inflow-outflow) in
September, 2022:
+7

Shelter System Outflow in
September, 2022:
1,122



People experiencing **chronic homelessness****



Shelter System Flow: Historical Trend

2018 - 2022

Shelter System Flow: Historical Trends dashboard has 6 visualization to depict historical trends of shelter system flow across the city of Toronto. Further, Select a Population Group, Select a Year, and Select a Month filters provide additional interactivity in the dashboard.

Select a Population Group

All Population

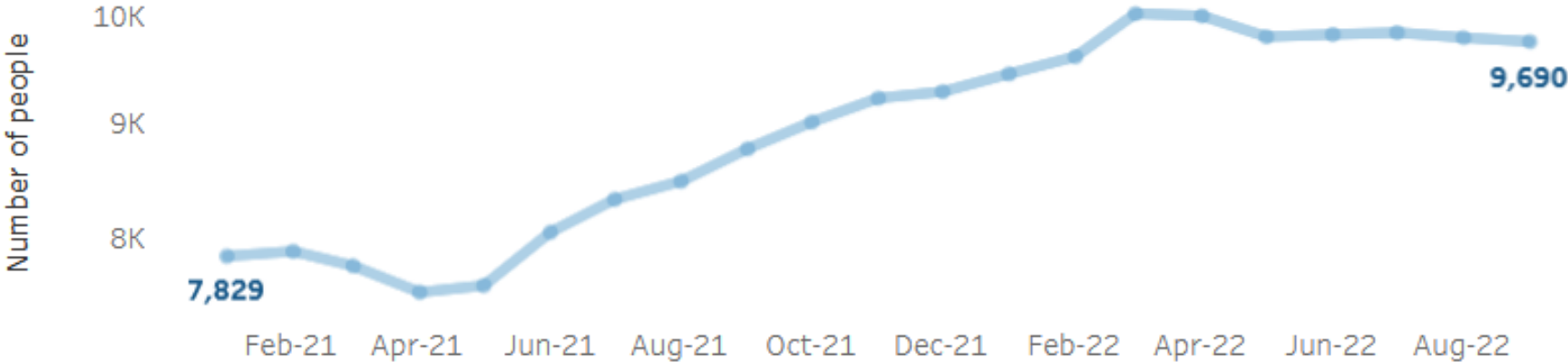
Select a Year(s)

(Multiple values)

Select a Month(s)

(All)

People actively homeless in the last 3 months



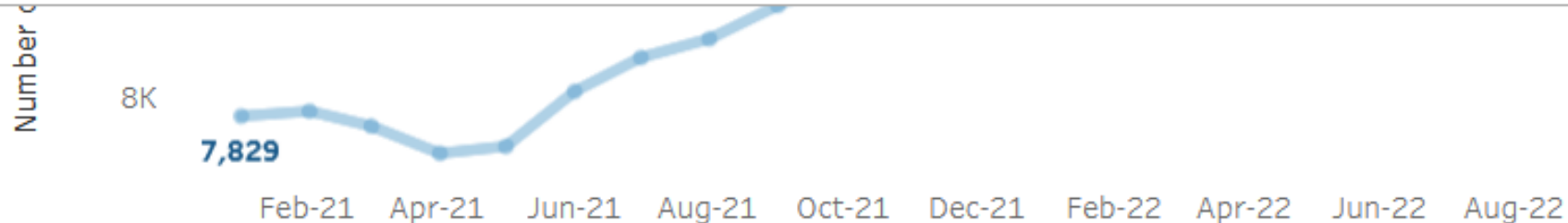
Shelter System Flow: Historical Trend 2018 - 2022

Shelter System Flow: Historical Trends dashboard has 6 visualization to depict historical trends of shelter system flow across the city of Toronto. Further, Select a Population Group, Select a Year, and Select a Month filters provide additional interactivity in the dashboard.

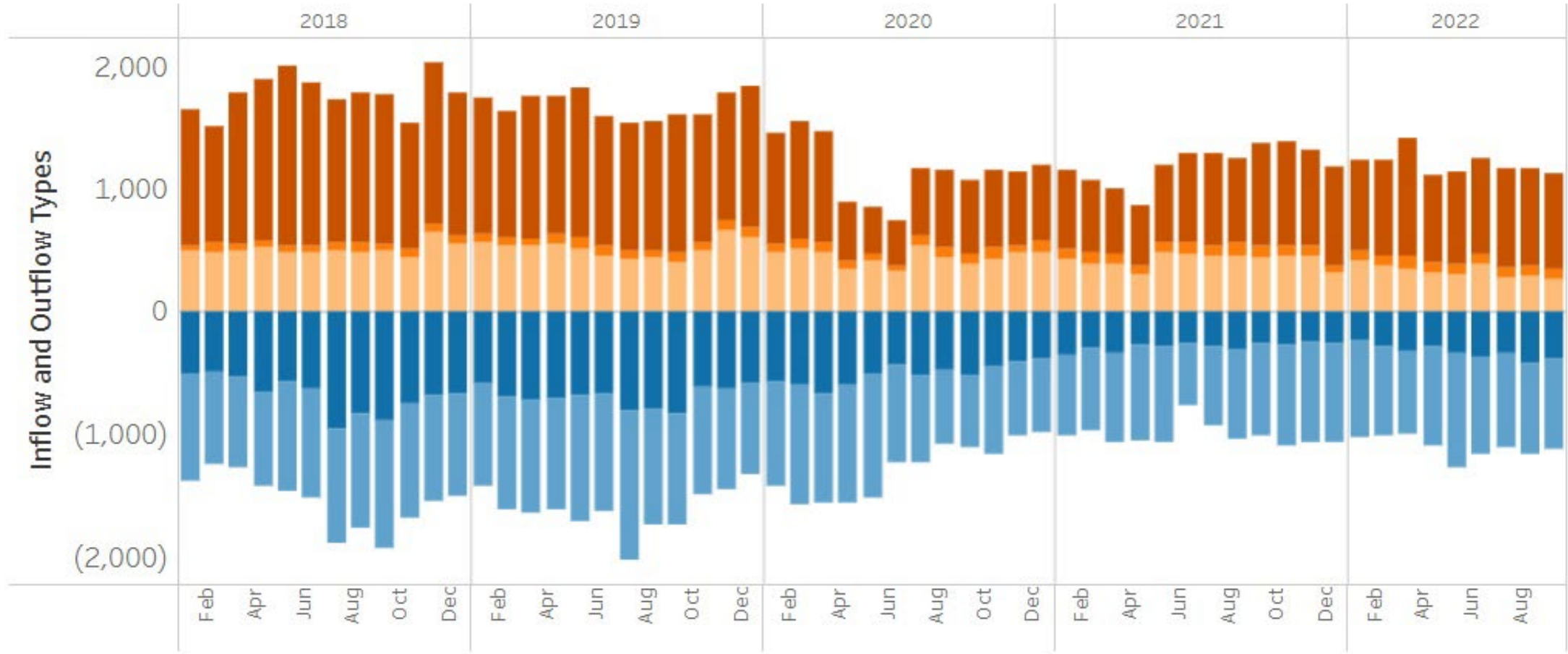
Select a Population Group

All Population

- All Population
- Chronic
- Families
- Indigenous
- Non-refugees
- Refugees
- Single Adult
- Youth



Detailed Inflow and Outflow each month



Color Legend for Detailed Inflow and Outflow each month

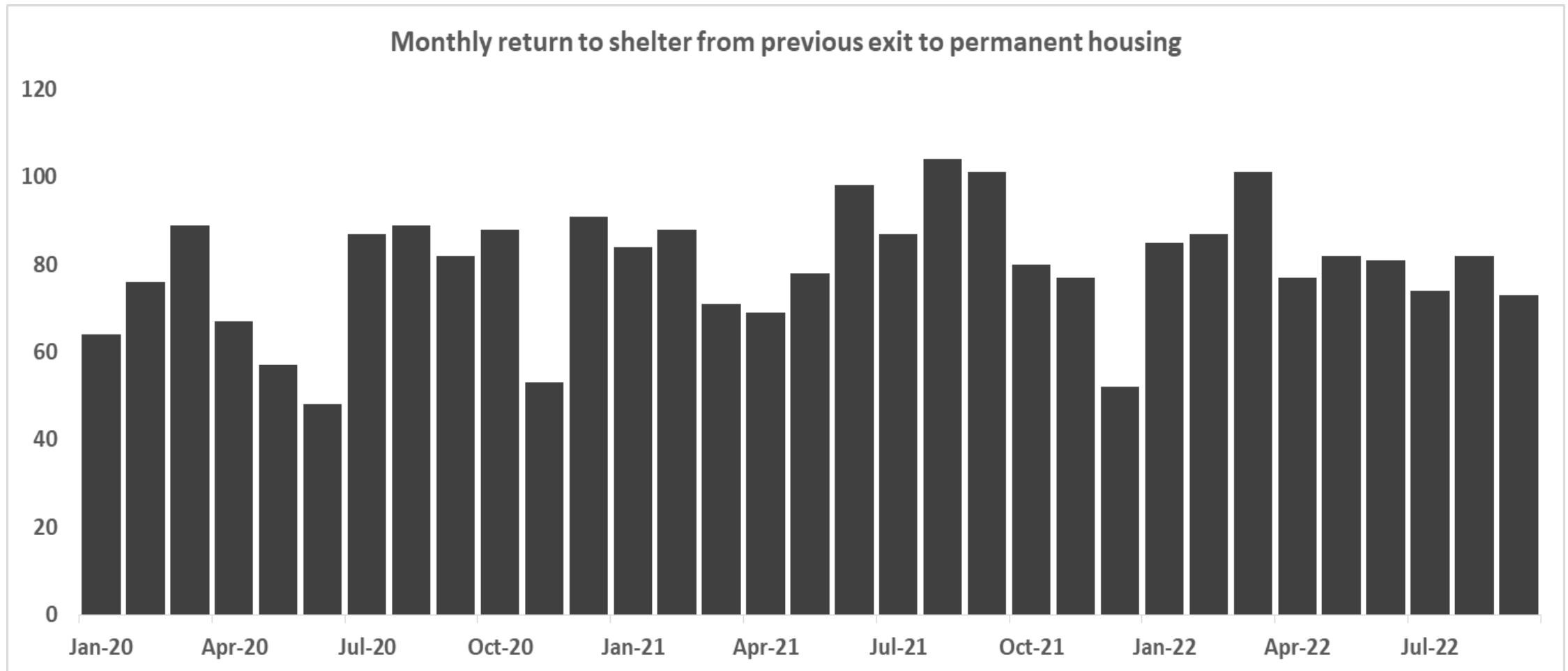
- Inflow - Newly Identified
- Inflow - Returned from Permanent Housing
- Inflow - Returned to shelter
- Outflow - Became Inactive
- Outflow - Moved to Permanent Housing



What impact has this data made?

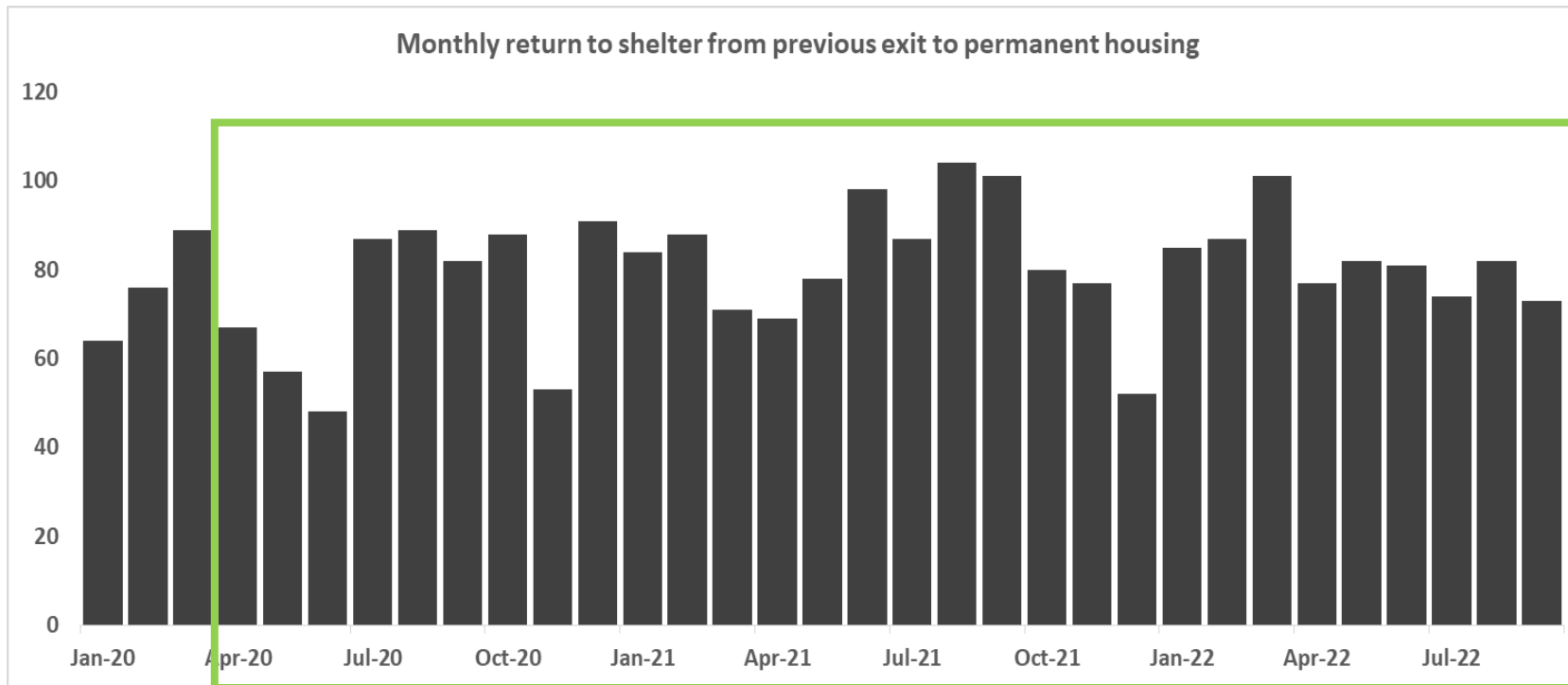
Calculating aggregate rates of return to shelter from permanent housing

Returns to Shelter from Permanent Housing



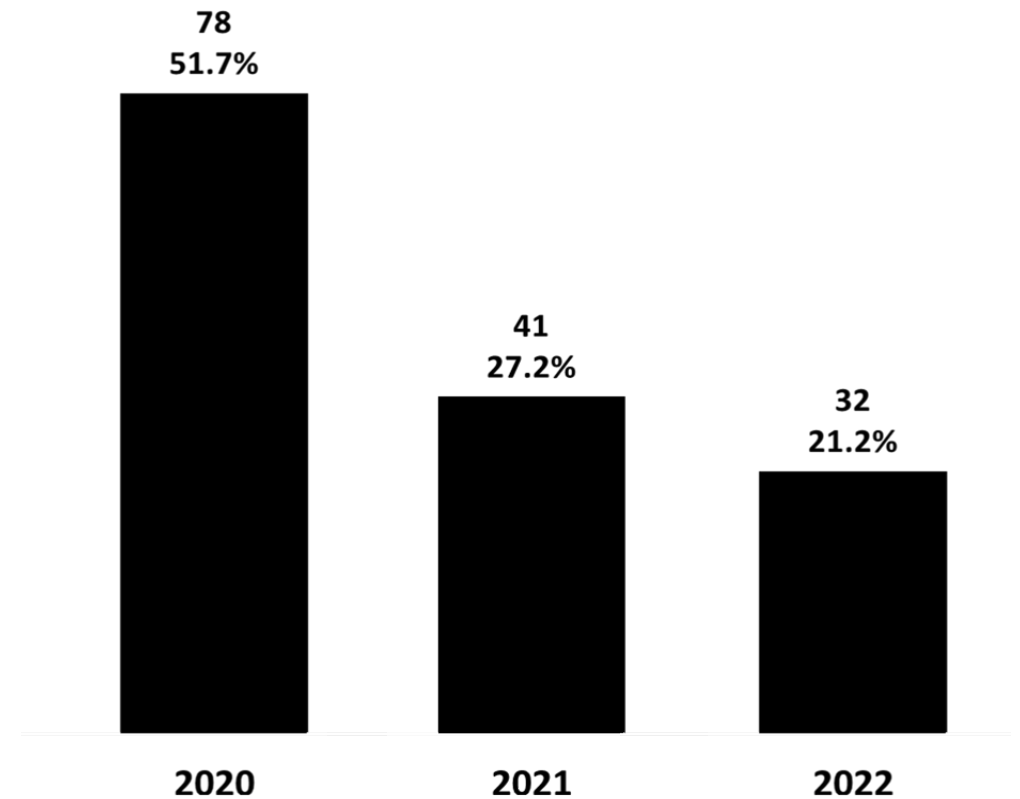
Calculating the Rate of Returns to Shelter from permanent housing – Cohort approach

- **1828 people** moved to permanent housing between Jan and March 2020
- Tracked if they returned from permanent housing to the shelter system over the next 2.5 years



Findings: 8.3% have returned to shelter

- 121 of the 1828 people returned to shelter after 2.5 years
- **91.7%** did not return to shelter
- Of those who returned, more than half returned in the first year
- 80% returned in the first two years



Returns to Shelter from permanent housing for Youth

- **127 Youth (16-24)** moved to permanent housing between Jan and March 2020
- **27 youth** returned to shelter over 2.5 years
- Return rate of **21.3%**
- While the sample is much smaller, this is a different trend vs the overall population



What impact has this data made?

Preventing returns to homelessness at an individual level

Meet Jesse

- **Jesse Moved to Permanent Housing** in July 2021
- He was referred to a support worker, Calvin, who visited him once a week for the first couple of months
- Calvin lost touch with Jesse. He wouldn't answer the phone and didn't answer the door when he visited
- In December 2021, Isaac **Returned from Permanent Housing** and was staying in a shelter again

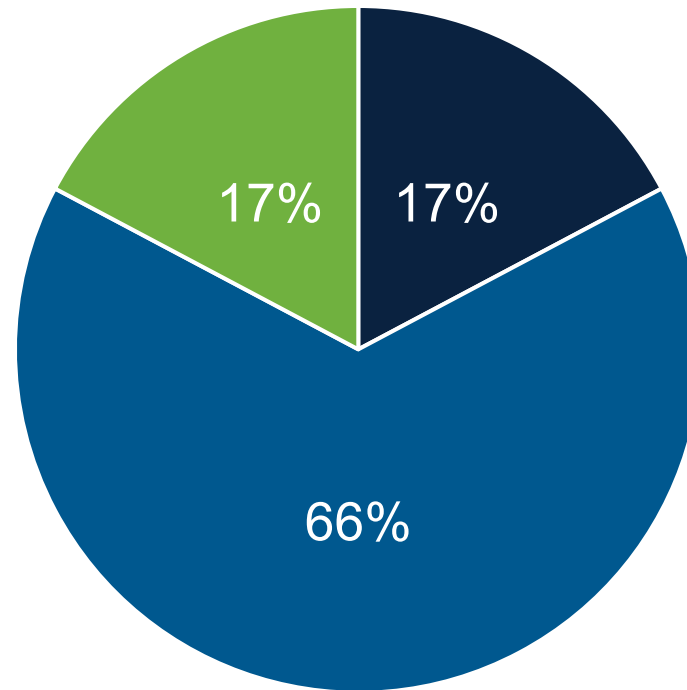


Jesse

- Because we know Jesse had a home and a support worker, we were able to connect with Jesse and ask what happened
- Jesse let us know that his home had been taken over and he could no longer stay there, so he had returned to shelter
- With Jesse's permission, we reached out to Calvin who connected with the landlord to report the unit takeover
- The landlord removed the unwanted guests, changed the locks, and Calvin helped Jesse to move back into his home

Outcomes

July 2021- October 2022



■ Returned to Homelessness ■ Resolved ■ Unresolved

Reasons for returning from permanent housing

- The main reasons someone Returned from Permanent Housing have been
 - Unit takeover
 - Unit abandonment
 - Issues with neighbour
- Data quality issues and delays in moving to housing have also been identified
- The individual impact is big, but it's also allowed us to think about some system-level changes



What impact has this data made?

Public discourse and service planning

Impact

- Use of data in staff reports to demonstrate need for different programs and funding, including provincial dollars for supportive housing
- Use of data in media with a more nuanced understanding of homelessness than nightly occupancy data alone
- Monthly housing and homelessness forums with partners at the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness
- Data-informed Homelessness Solutions Service Plan
- Increased awareness of how many people move through our system each month



What's next?

Next Steps

- PDSA action cycle focussing on youth, including reducing returns to homelessness
- Add people who are sleeping outdoors
- Add racial identity data and veteran data
- Enhance our capacity to do complex analysis of this large data set



Toronto's Service Triage, Assessment & Referral Support (STARS) Tool: Empowering Trusting Relationships

CAEH, November 2, 2022

Stephane Doucett, Aboriginal Labour Force
Development Circle (ALFDC) and SSHA

Alison Kooistra, Shelter, Support & Housing
Administration (SSHA), City of Toronto



Trusting relationships are key

How does STARS support building trust?

1. System-Level
2. Ground-Level





System Level

Housing focused services

Housing opportunities

Diversion

Prevention

- Central Intake
- Outreach
- Emergency Shelter and overnight services
- Transitional Shelter
- Drop-in services

Intake & Triage

Housing Checklist

Supports Assessment

- Navigation
- Referral
- Prioritization
- Matching

- Affordable housing
- Community-based housing (Rent geared-to-income)
- Housing benefits and supports in private market rental
- Supportive Housing



Access, choice, cultural safe | Trust and rapport built over time | Immediate supports provided | Prioritization is separate from matching

Service Triage, Assessment & Referral Support (STARS) Tool Implementation Status

Intake
&
Triage

Piloted by 14 shelters and 7 street outreach providers, and launched to all agencies using SMIS on **June 28, 2022**.

Housing
Checklist

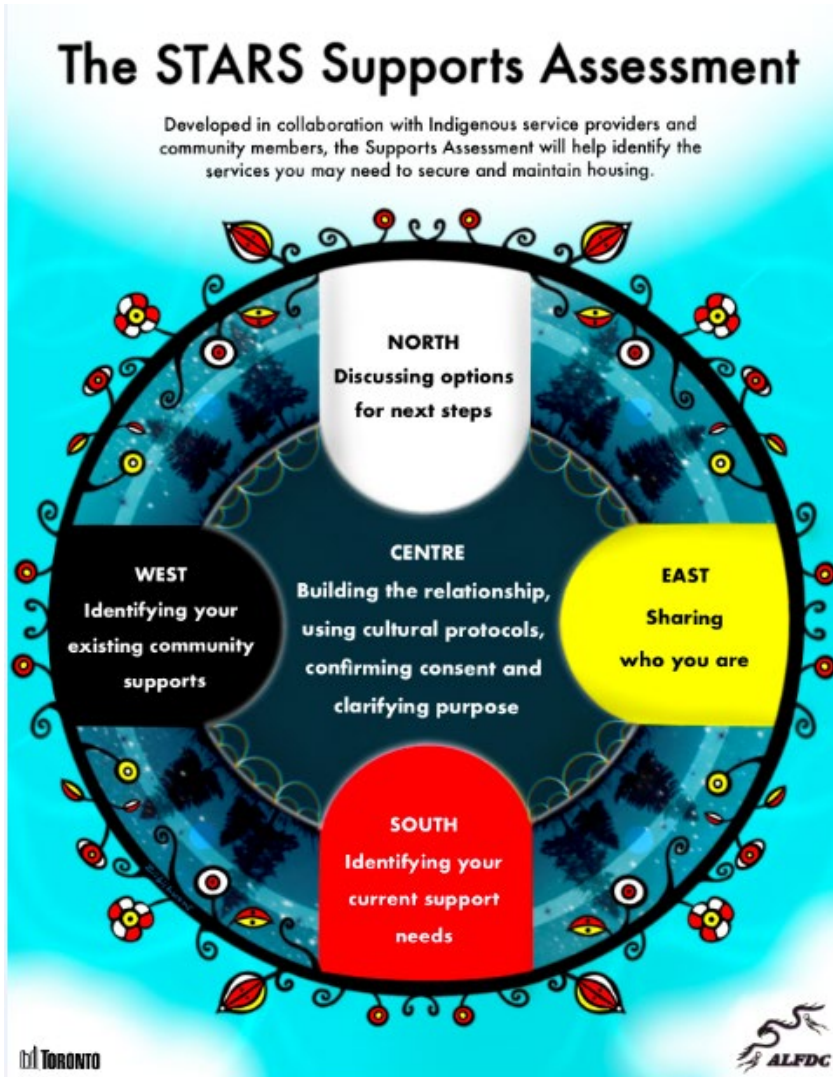
Supports
Assessment

The Supports Assessment launched on **June 20, 2022** in MS Word format to all Indigenous service providers participating in Coordinated Access. It replaced our existing Housing Support Screening Tool (HSST). Plans for full rollout are in progress.



Ground Level

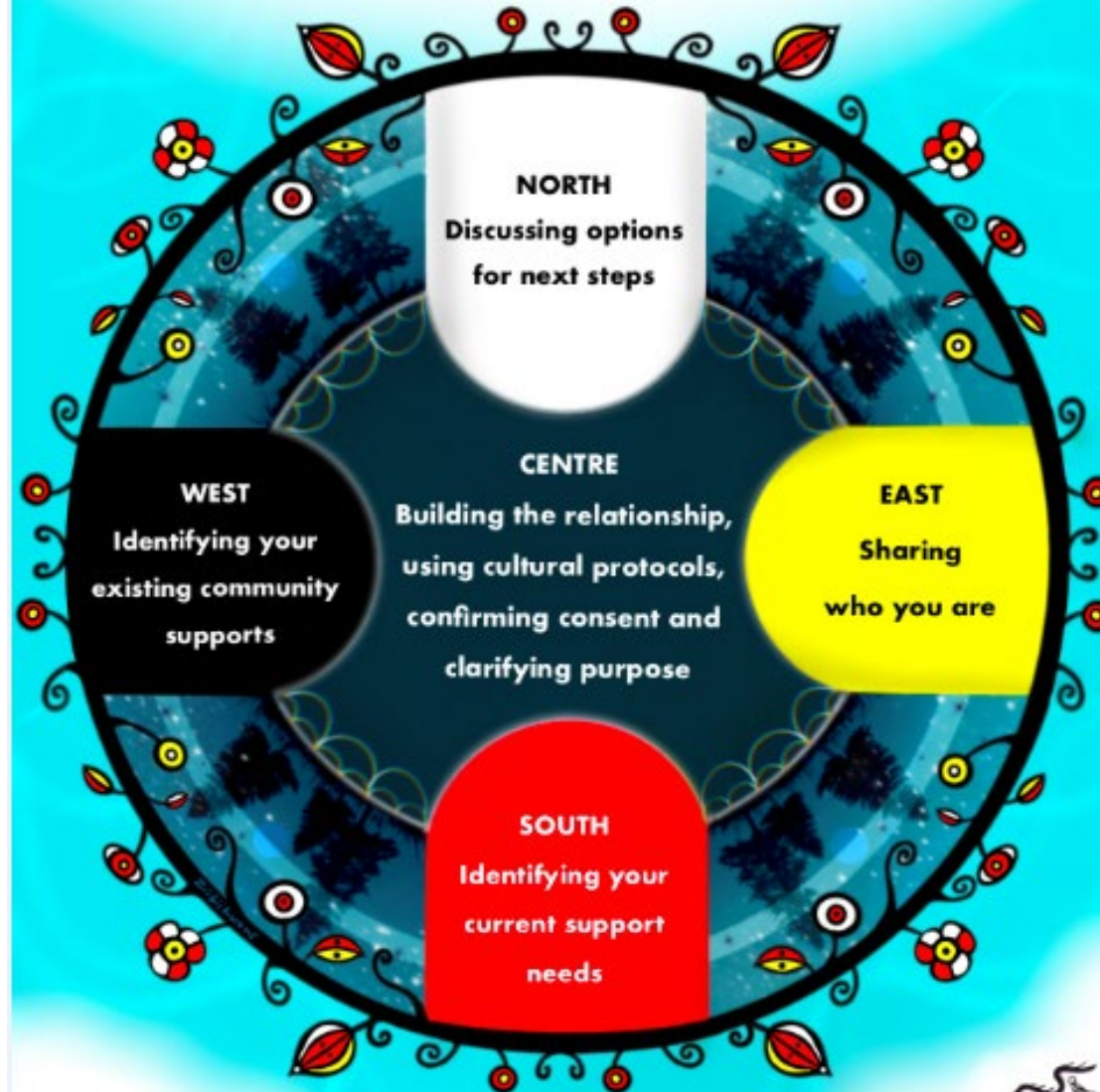
STARS Supports Assessment: Visual Aid for Workers and Community Members



* For use by Indigenous service providers only

The STARS Supports Assessment

Developed in collaboration with Indigenous service providers and community members, the Supports Assessment will help identify the services you may need to secure and maintain housing.





CENTRE

Building the relationship,
using cultural protocols,
confirming consent and
clarifying purpose

A stylized illustration of a night scene. A large white full moon is in the top left. A black tree trunk with yellow and red circular ornaments is on the right. A yellow speech bubble is in the center-right. The background is dark blue with a light blue path and some dark foliage. The overall style is simple and graphic.

EAST

Sharing

who you are




SOUTH
Identifying your
current support
needs



WEST

**Identifying your
existing community
supports**



NORTH
**Discussing options
for next steps**



**RETURN TO
CENTRE**

STARS SUPPORTS ASSESSMENT

Developed in collaboration with community members and service providers, including Indigenous agencies, the Supports Assessment will help identify the services you may need to secure and maintain housing.

1. Ask you to share who you are and what's happening in your life.

4. Discuss timelines and options for next steps.

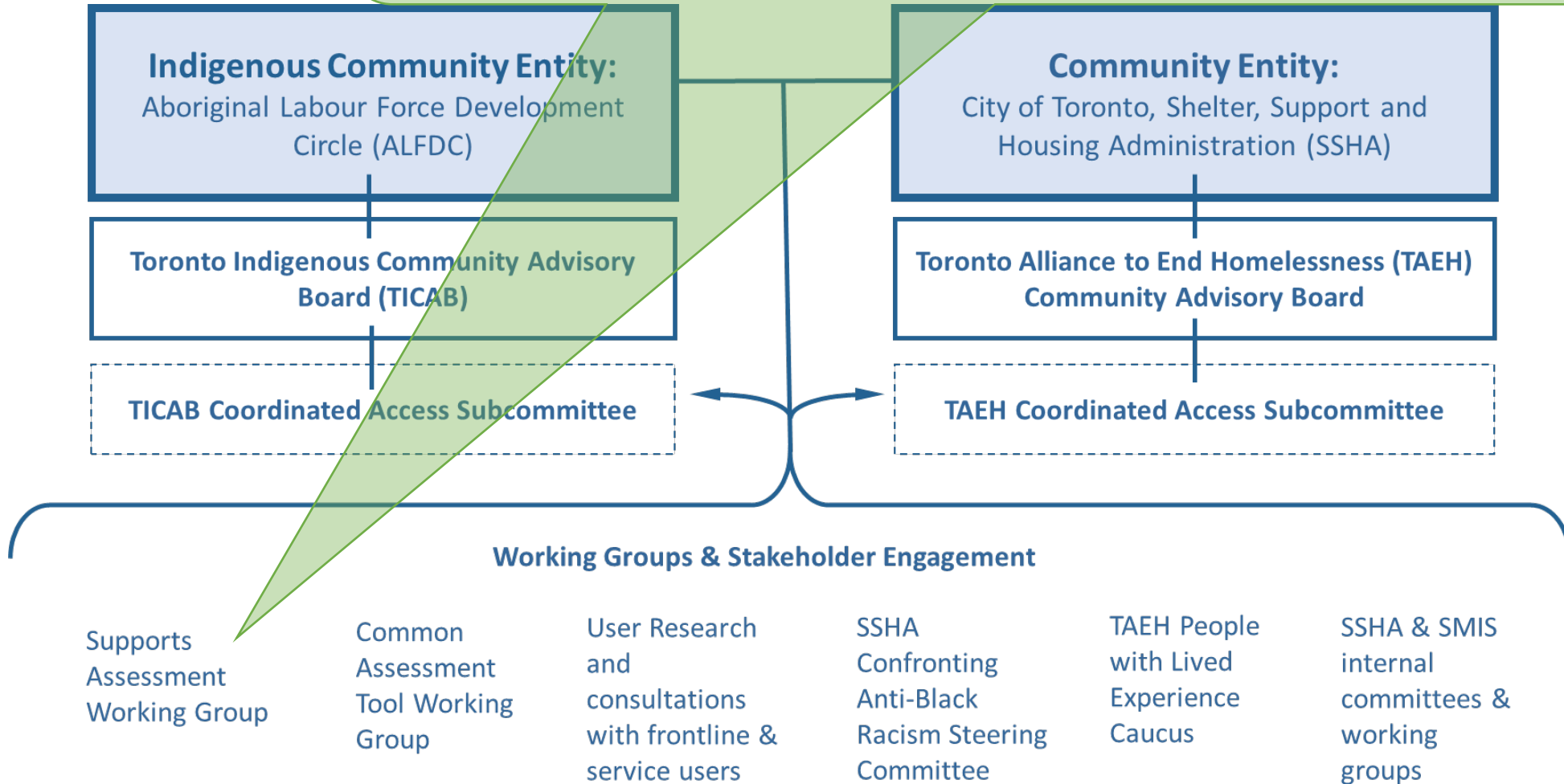


2. Identify your current support needs.

3. Identify your existing community supports.



“One thing I love about the tool is that relationship aspect... Can we have a version of this poster that doesn't appropriate Indigenous culture, but learns from it?”



Trusting relationships are key

1. System-Level
2. Ground-Level



Community-Level



For more information on Toronto's Coordinated Access System

City of Toronto Website:

- Coordinated Access: www.Toronto.ca/Coordinated-Access
- Shelter System Flow Data: www.Toronto.ca/Shelter-System-Flow-Data/
- STARS Intake & Triage and Housing Checklist training: www.Toronto.ca/Training-Modules

Previous CAEH Presentations:

<https://training.caeh.ca/upcoming-webinars/webinar-archive/>

- June 9, 2022: Toronto: Progress Update on the STARS Common Assessment Tool
- April 12, 2022: Toronto: PATHS Prioritization Policy
- March 23, 2022: Toronto: Using Data to Reduce Returns to Homelessness
- February 15, 2022: Toronto: Rapid Re-housing Initiative

<https://conference.caeh.ca/about-the-conference/media-archive/2021-conference-presentations/>

- November 3, 2021: Doing Things Differently: Centring Relationships in Assessment

Rapid Rehousing Initiative

The Innovative Partnerships Driving Successful Client Outcomes of Toronto's Rapid Rehousing Initiative



FURNITURE BANK

Toronto Community Housing



How it started

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, the City of Toronto established the Rapid Rehousing Initiative (RRHI) to move people experiencing homelessness into rent-gear-to-income (RGI) housing. The initiative was part of a comprehensive response to move people out of congregate shelter and encampment settings and into appropriate physical distancing accommodations.



FURNITURE BANK

Toronto Community Housing



How did we do it?

- Identified people experiencing chronic homelessness currently on Centralized Waitlist for RGI housing
- Provided immediate access to housing with no readiness conditions
- Centred Client choice and participation
- Built partnerships to:
 - Ensure that each unit was furnished and supplied
 - Get immediate access to funds through Ontario Works
 - Provide each tenant with mobile follow-up supports.

The Furniture Bank



Shelter Support and Housing Administration (SSHA)

20+ Follow Up Supports Providers, including specialized supports for Seniors, Youth, Indigenous people, and other priority groups



Cross sector collaboration

100+ shelter locations

Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC)

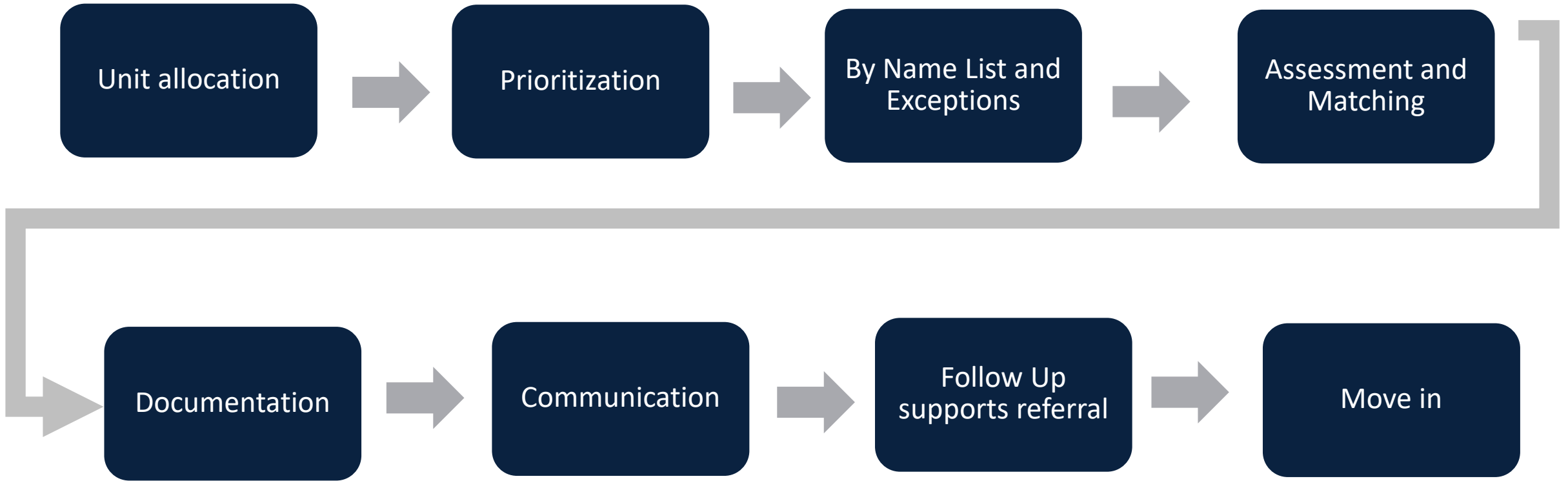
Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS) OW/ODSP Office

Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC)

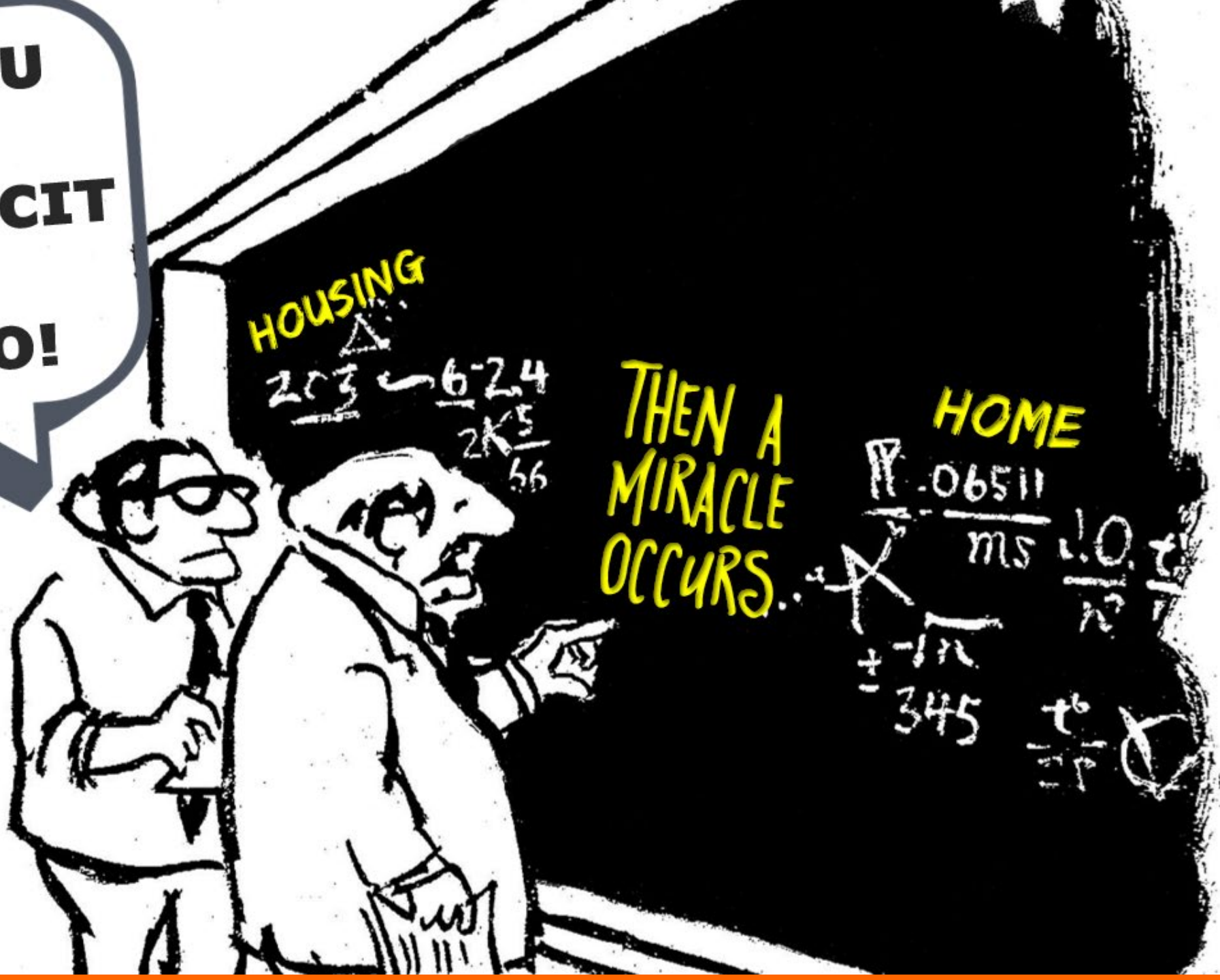


City Office of Partnerships

The Process



' I THINK YOU SHOULD BE MORE EXPLICIT HERE... IN STEP TWO!



HOUSING

$203 \sim 6-24$
 $2K^3$
 56

THEN A MIRACLE OCCURS.

HOME

$\frac{.06511}{ms}$
 $\frac{1.0}{2}$
 $\frac{t^6}{27}$
 345

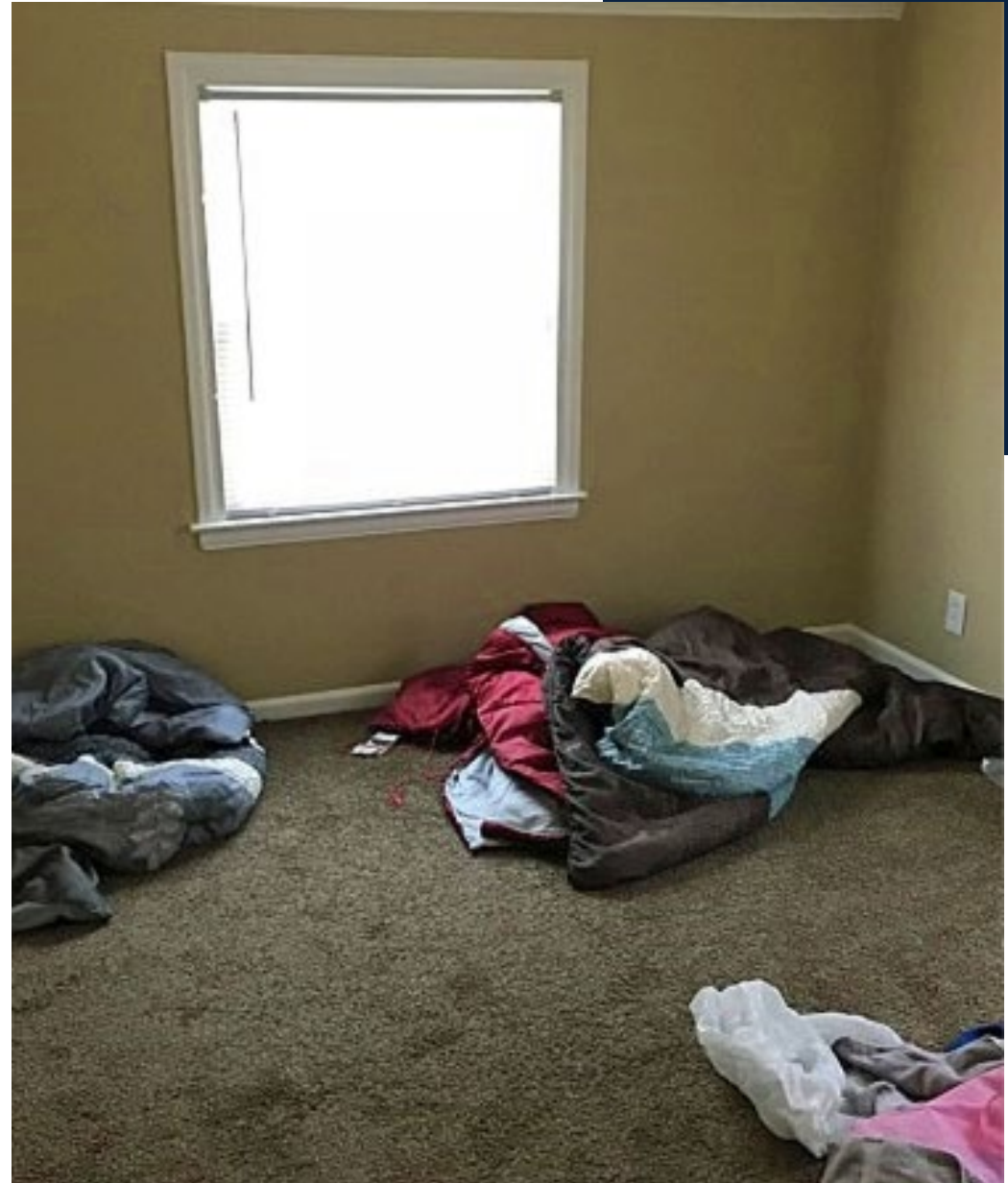
HOME

FURNITURE BANK



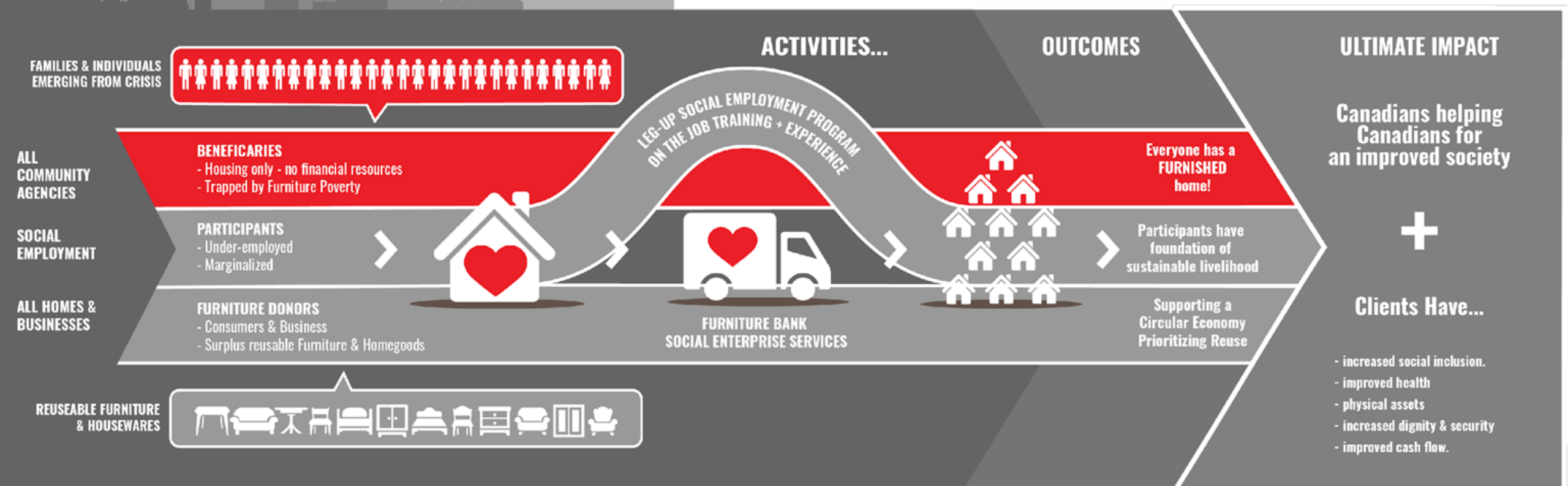
Housed but Homeless

- Empty inadequate housing offers very little motivation to maintain housing stability and stay away from the shelter system.
- Research shows that 40% of people exiting shelters who were in their own housing still considered themselves homeless.



Families moving out of crisis

Our Vision:
A Canada in which everyone has the stability and dignity of a furnished home.



Powered with social employment



- Ongoing support of providing living wage jobs for low-income, undereducated, un or underemployed, at-risk youth, newcomers & immigrants, BIPOC, LGBTQ+ and Indigenous individuals in warehouse, trucking, workshop and service roles.
- Beyond job related skills participants reported:
 - 83% improved ability to manage moods and emotions
 - 82% better able to manage change / crisis at work
 - 67% better able to work well with others
 - 89% felt they could work through disagreements and conflict
 - 58% felt they were better prepared with a plan and career goals

Community furniture & homegoods donations & transport



Rapid Homing Solutions

- Centralizing in-kind donations
- Standardized kits based on family size
- Centralized logistics, kit assembly, and transport across the city.



1 Furnished Unit



CATEGORY	ITEMS
Furniture	Includes: Coffee Table, End Table, Kitchen Table & Chairs, Armchair or Loveseat or Sofa, Mattress - Queen, Double or Twin, Dresser, Night Table, Housewares: Dishes, Pots & Pans (Includes delivery)
Kitchen	Cutlery, cutting knife, Dishes, serving bowls, Cooking Utensils, Cutting board, Can opener, Dish cloth, Dish towel
Electronics	TV
Bedroom	Bedding (sheets, duvet cover, and comforter per person), Pillow, Hangers
Bathroom	Includes: Toilet paper, Toilet brush, Towels (2 per person), Shower curtain, waste basket, bath mattress
Cleaning Supplies	Includes: Surface cleaners, Paper towels, Dish soaps, Laundry detergent, hand sanitizer, masks.
Toiletries	Hand soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, and other personal items.

Leveraged community donations to limit purchases...

Budget per unit is a fraction versus purchasing new

Average Budget for Furnishing One bedroom apartment

LIVING ROOM	\$ 2400
Sofa & seating	\$1000
Coffee table, end tables, TV stand	\$1200
Area rugs, home decor, lamps	\$200
BEDROOM	\$ 2200
Mattress & box spring	\$800
Bed frame, night stands	\$800
Dresser, storage & lamps	\$600
KITCHEN & DINING	\$ 1500
Dining table & chair set	\$1100
Cookware & storage	\$400
BATHROOM	\$ 100
Shower curtains and extra storage	
EVERYTHING ELSE	\$ 750
Bedding, Pillows, Duvets, towels, bathmats	\$200
TV, Microwave, Toaster, Kettle	\$300
Cooking utensils Dinnerware and glasses	\$200
Cleaning supplies	\$50
DELIVERY (estimated)	\$ 500
TAX (estimated)	\$ 903
YOUR BUDGET	\$8,353



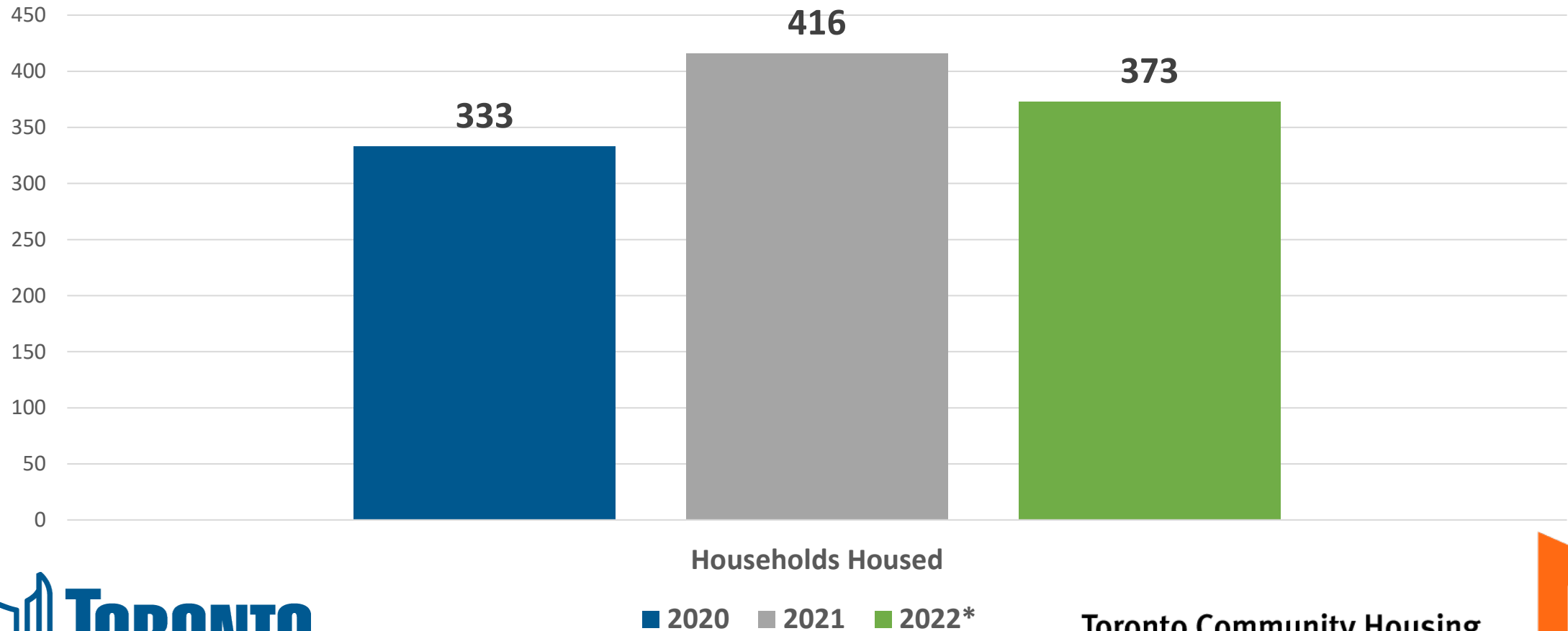
Ensuring Housing Stability

- Increase supports to people exiting homelessness
- Identify issues quickly
- Work with service providers to solve issues as they arise
- Streamline internal processes and communication

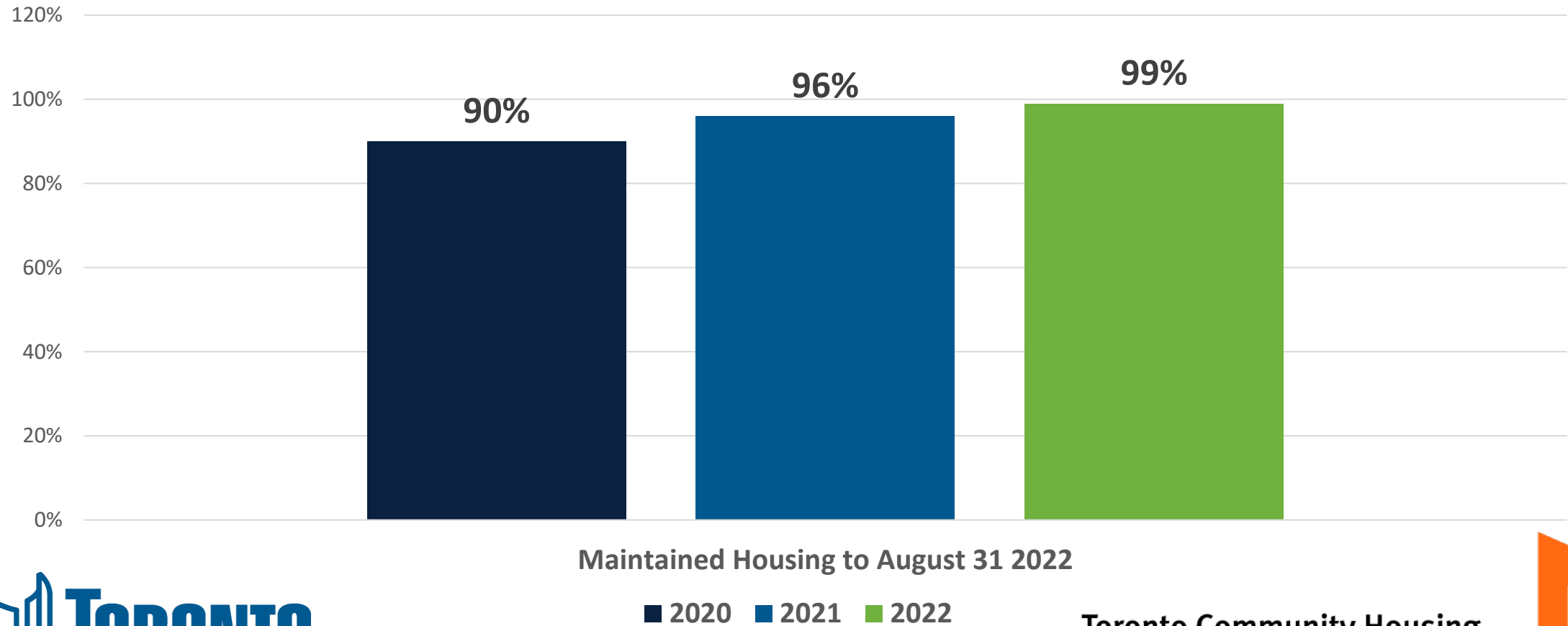
Rapid Rehousing Support Model

- TCHC team acts as liaison with Coordinated Access and follow-up workers from community agencies
- Community Service Coordinators (CSCs) work with agency follow-up workers to support housing stability
- TCHC's proactive approaches to support housing stability (integrated teams, CSU, arrears monitoring, OCHE, SPIDER, anchor agencies partners)

Outcomes: Households Housed



Outcomes: Housing Retention (TCHC)



Outcomes: Reasons for Move-out (TCHC)

- Phase 1 (2020)
 - 23 households are no longer housed
 - 5 deceased
 - 6 evicted (3 for cause and 3 for arrears)
 - 11 abandoned unit or moved out with no reason given
 - 1 incarcerated
- Phase 2 (2021)
 - 20 households are no longer housed
 - 4 deceased
 - 15 abandoned unit or moved out with no reason
 - 1 incarcerated
- Phase 3 (2022 – to August 31)
 - 3 households are no longer housed
 - 2 deceased
 - 1 no reason given



What have we learned?

- Building relationships is key to positive outcomes
- Successful transitions require support
- Service users always have self determination
- Collaboration is the key to providing long term stabilization for tenants
- Partnerships are essential for the efficacy of this program