



Canada



MAKING THE SHIFT<sup>INC</sup>

# Making the Prevention Shift in Québec: Prévention Itinérance Jeunesse (PIJ)

Mélodie Cordeau & Sue-Ann MacDonald (Université de Montréal)

Coalition Jeunes+ & PIJ team (Prévention de l'itinérance jeunesse)

[coalitionjeunesplus@danslarue.org](mailto:coalitionjeunesplus@danslarue.org)

[Sueann.macdonald@umontreal.ca](mailto:Sueann.macdonald@umontreal.ca)

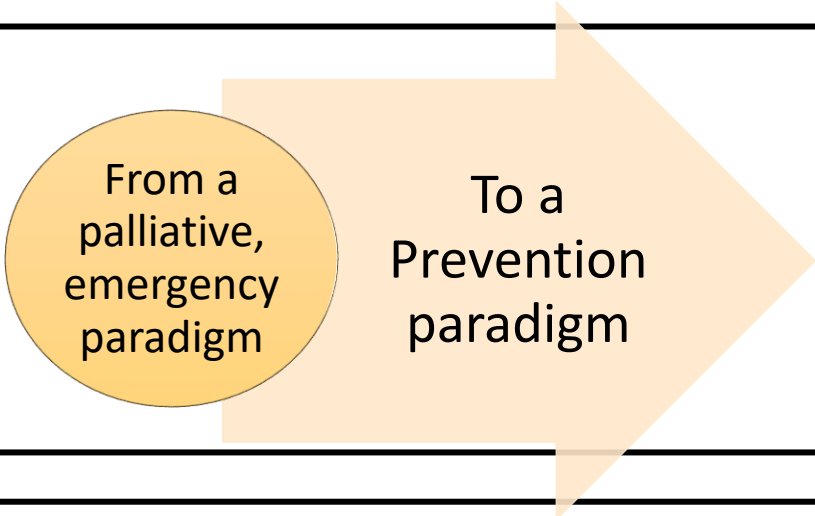
# Making the Prevention Shift in Québec: Prévention de l'itinérance jeunesse (PIJ)

## Who

- Team of researchers (academic and lived experience – youth committee)
- Community and institutional partners

## What

- To develop a made-in-Québec prevention framework
- Knowledge synthesis
  - Apprehend promising practices
  - Mobilise local knowledge
  - Identify research, practice, and policy priorities



From a  
palliative,  
emergency  
paradigm

To a  
Prevention  
paradigm

## How

- literature review
- focus groups with intervention workers
- individual interviews with youth
- iterative analysis with team members and Youth Committee

# Guiding Principles of Youth Homelessness Prevention (Coalition Jeunes+)



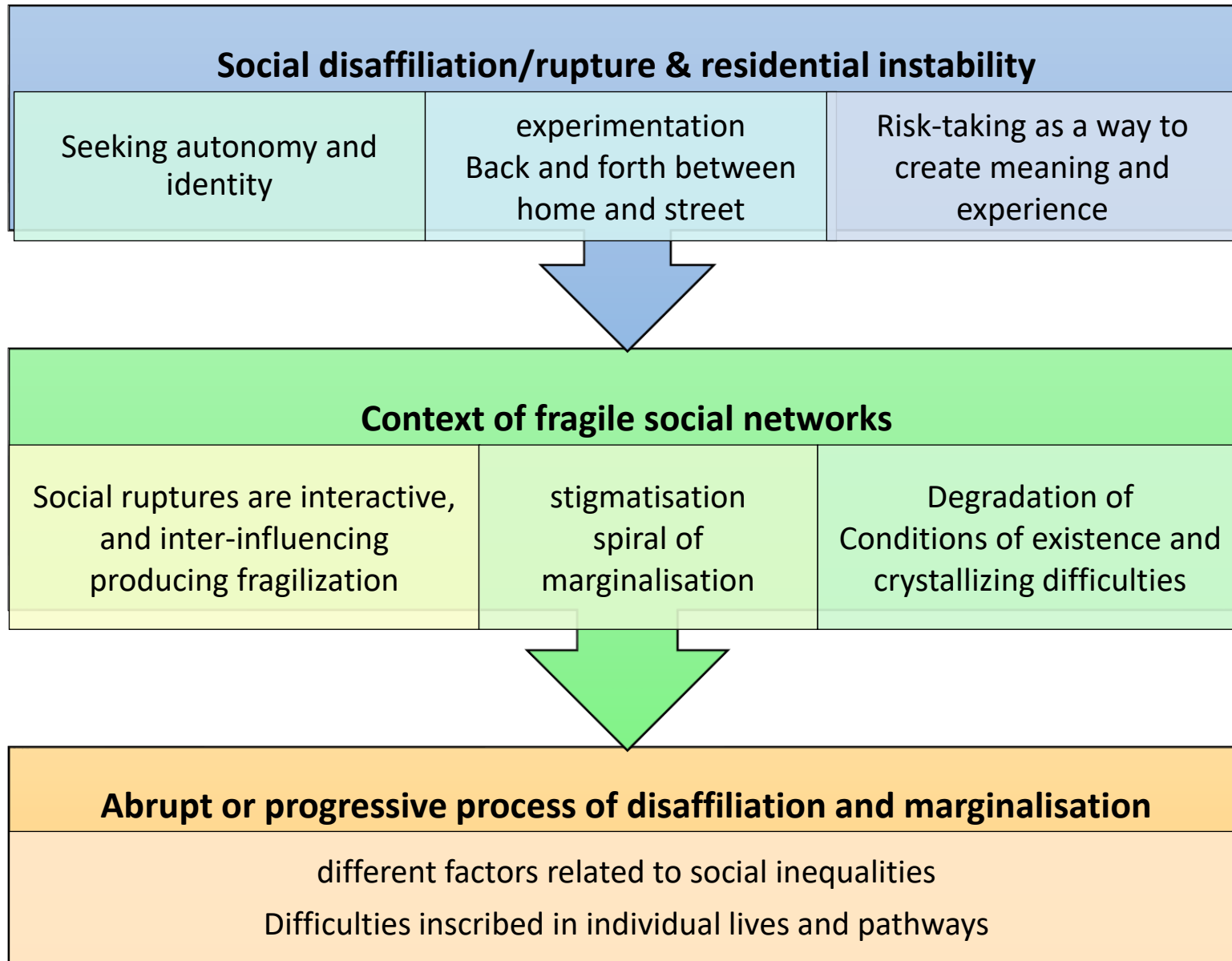
## ● Recognition

- Of structural and systemic causes of youth homelessness
- The importance of youth strengths, knowledge, resilience and agency
- That youthhood is an important period of development, identity-formation and transition to adulthood (autonomy)

## ● A prevention approach based on the respect and promotion of human rights and access to :

- Equality and absence of discrimination- from cultural, social, racial, gender, and sexual, capacity forms of oppression
- Justice and to public space
- Citizenship and socialisation
- Education and socio-professional integration
- Self-determination and access to information
- Housing and adequate, safe, clean and secure environments
- Food security and decent revenue (living wage)
- Mental and physical health services, to social services and child/youth protection services (accessibility and adaptability)

# Defining youth homelessness

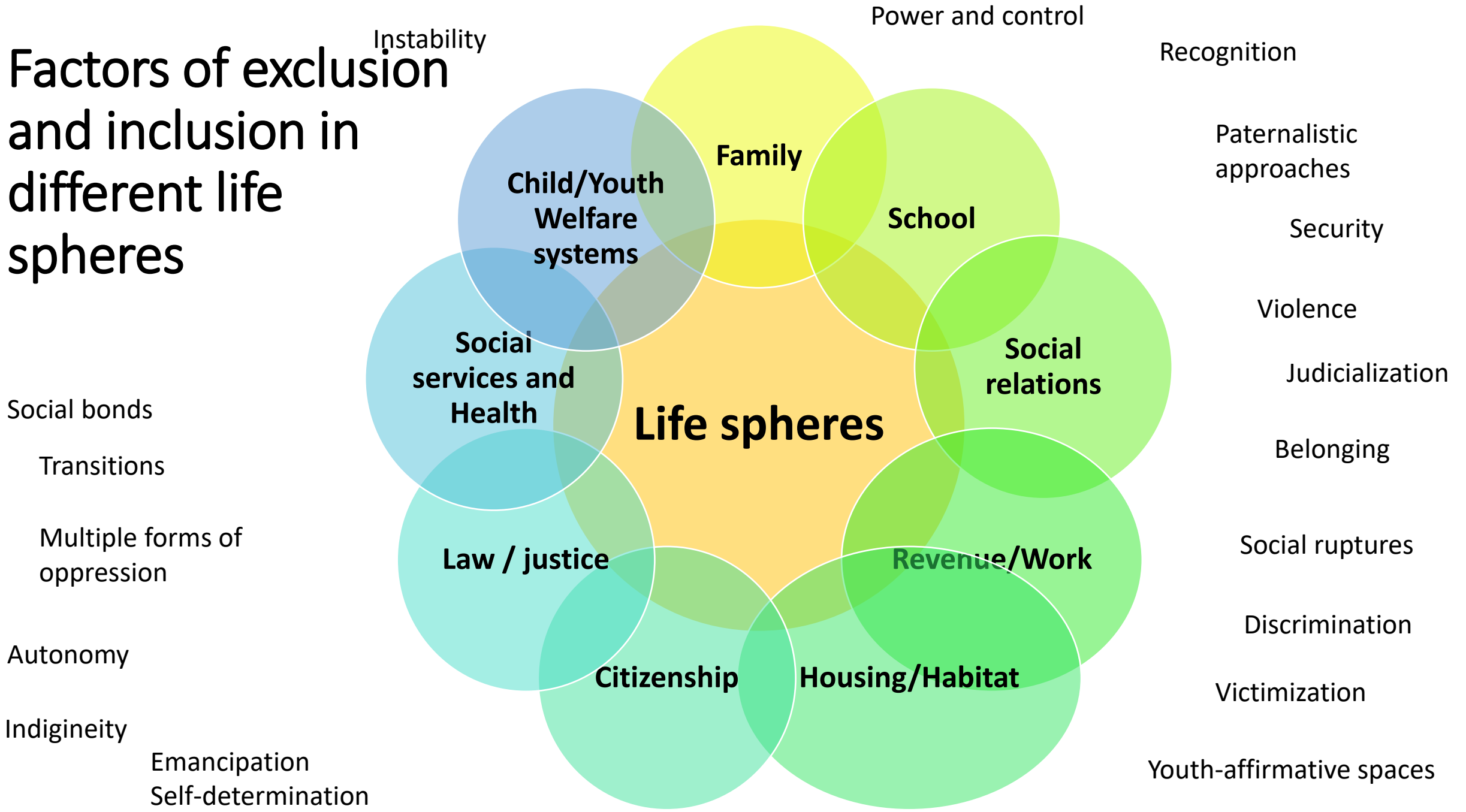


**A State of being**  
*-in survival mode*  
*- when the « outside » is your home*

**A lifestyle that is**  
*- fluid, ever changing, in flux*  
*- responds to basic needs*  
*- experiments with different ways of living*

**A choice**  
*- develop habits to live without a stable roof.*  
*- to live outside of the « rules » (constraints)*  
*- in a conformist society that excludes*  
*- to experiment « ways » of living without it being imposed*  
*- ultimate liberty*

# Factors of exclusion and inclusion in different life spheres



# Protection and recognition – Citizenship

## Recognize that homelessness is a collective responsibility

- Reduce poverty, social inequalities and discrimination
- Advocate for more housing (affordable, social, with(out) accompaniment)
- Leverage provincial homelessness policies for change

## Promote the social inclusion of ALL youth

- Support youth's social inclusion in all of their life spheres (global, personalised approach)
- Raise societal awareness to deconstruct harmful stereotypes, dismantle prejudice

## Ensure equitable access and positive experiences in social protection systems

Delivers services that are accessible and humane.

- Revise exclusion criteria
- Revise administrative delays to access healthcare coverage and social assistance
- Plan and support better transitions between public systems (youth to adult), especially at critical moments of transition
- Support better communication between services and during moments of transition: global (non-siloed) approaches to avoid revolving door syndrome

# Connection and Belonging: Feeling like « a part » of society

Take into account the needs and rights of youth to feel a part of society, to find a sense of security and belonging

**Be interested, listen, give opportunities for sharing of experiences and meaning-making (non-judgemental)**

**Include youth in society-making projects, create youth-affirmative spaces for youth leadership to grow**

**Listen to their ideas, their distress, their realities**  
*(« No future youth »)*

**Listen to their hopes, their ideas, their solutions**

**Given them space for their voices**

**Create real spaces of leadership to avoid tokenism and so they can develop**

**Unpacking the 3 Cs (CRISES): Connection, Citizenship, Climate**

# The importance of relationships

Consider the needs and rights of youth to have significant, authentic relationships, with others whose role is to support them

## Services

Build services based on youth and clinical expertise to respond to their needs

Develop youth-affirmative services in their different milieus (family, youth protection, school)

Encourage peer-led practices

## Relationships

Reinforce social bonds and belonging in their communities, localised responses

Recenter on the importance of relationships and belonging, authenticity (less on the clinical, professional)



# Solid foundations for accompanying and supporting youth

Put in place the necessary conditions to ensure the respect of youth's needs, rhythms and rights

Recognize the importance of community supports

**Humanise services**

Improve conditions of work  
(mission funding)

Reduce administrative load  
(quality vs quantity)

Ensure financing of the mission  
(latitude and coherence)

Recognize different forms of knowledge and expertise  
(situated knowledge)

Bring services back to a human and personalised level  
(intake and follow-up)

Stabilise resources  
(continuity and engagement)

Support collaboration between resources  
(complementarity)

Thank you!

