Making Research *Matter!*

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness

Stephen Gaetz
President - Canadian Observatory on Homelessness
Professor, Faculty of Education
York Univerity, Toronto, Canada

Part 1

Mobilizing Research

KEY CHALLENGE:

Homelessness research has NOT had the impact on policy, practice and advocacy that it should.

HOW DO WE CREATE THE IMPACT?

Four Uses of Research

- **Conceptual**
- **Instrumental**
- **Symbolic**
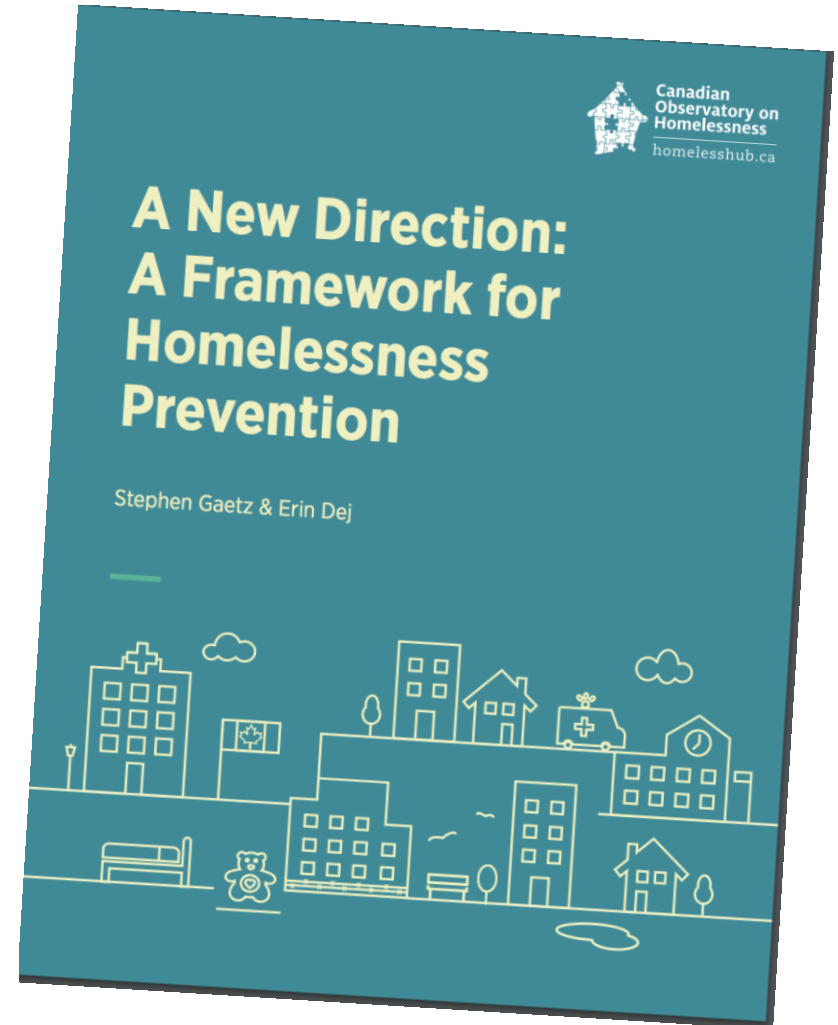- **Process**

Conceptual research

Contributes to the:

"subtle but potentially weighty shifts in knowledge, understanding and discourse, can be hugely significant in policy and practice settings, not just as a means to more instrumental impacts from research but as an end in themselves."

(Sandra Nutley).

Conceptual research

Instrumental use of research

This refers to situations where research can be seen to have a direct and concrete impact on decision-making and actions by policy-makers and practitioners.

- Typically focuses on existing policies and practices
- Often involves program evaluation research that answers the questions:

What works, for whom and in what contexts?

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Hierarchy of Evidence
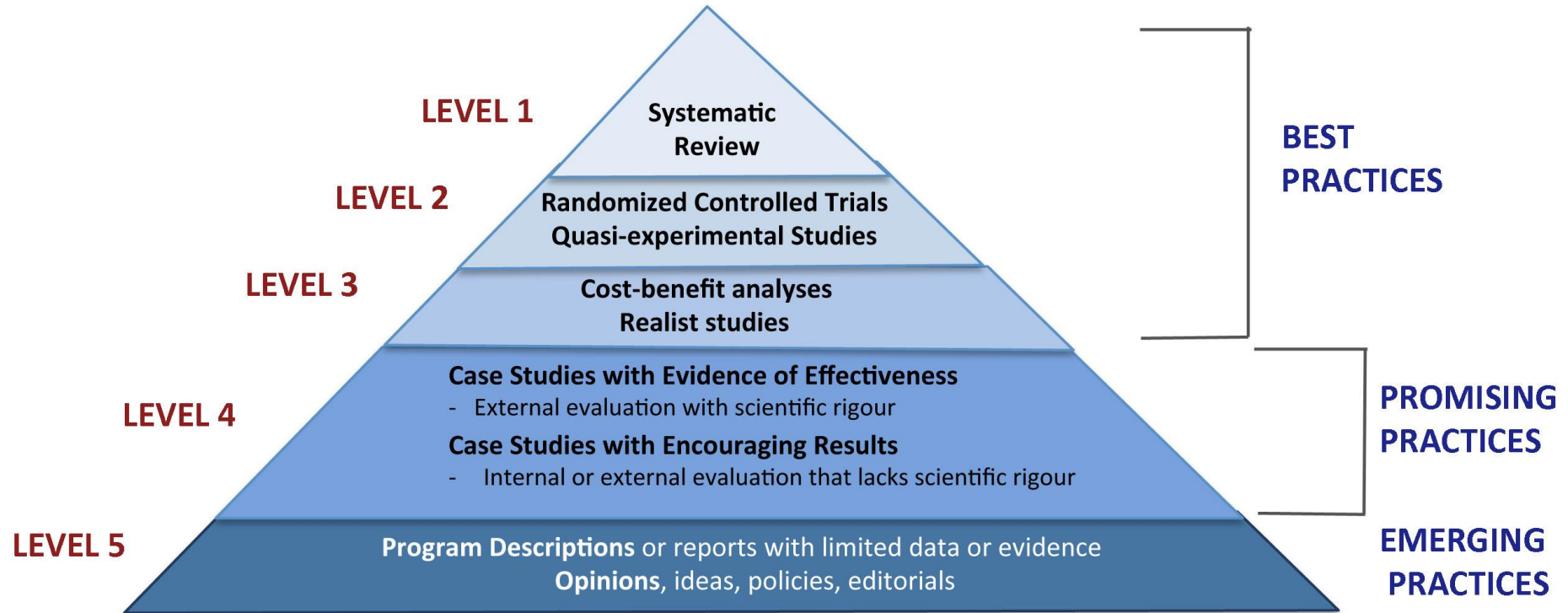
A good example . . .

Symbolic research

. . . involves using research results to legitimate and sustain arguments, strategies and positions.

Symbolic research
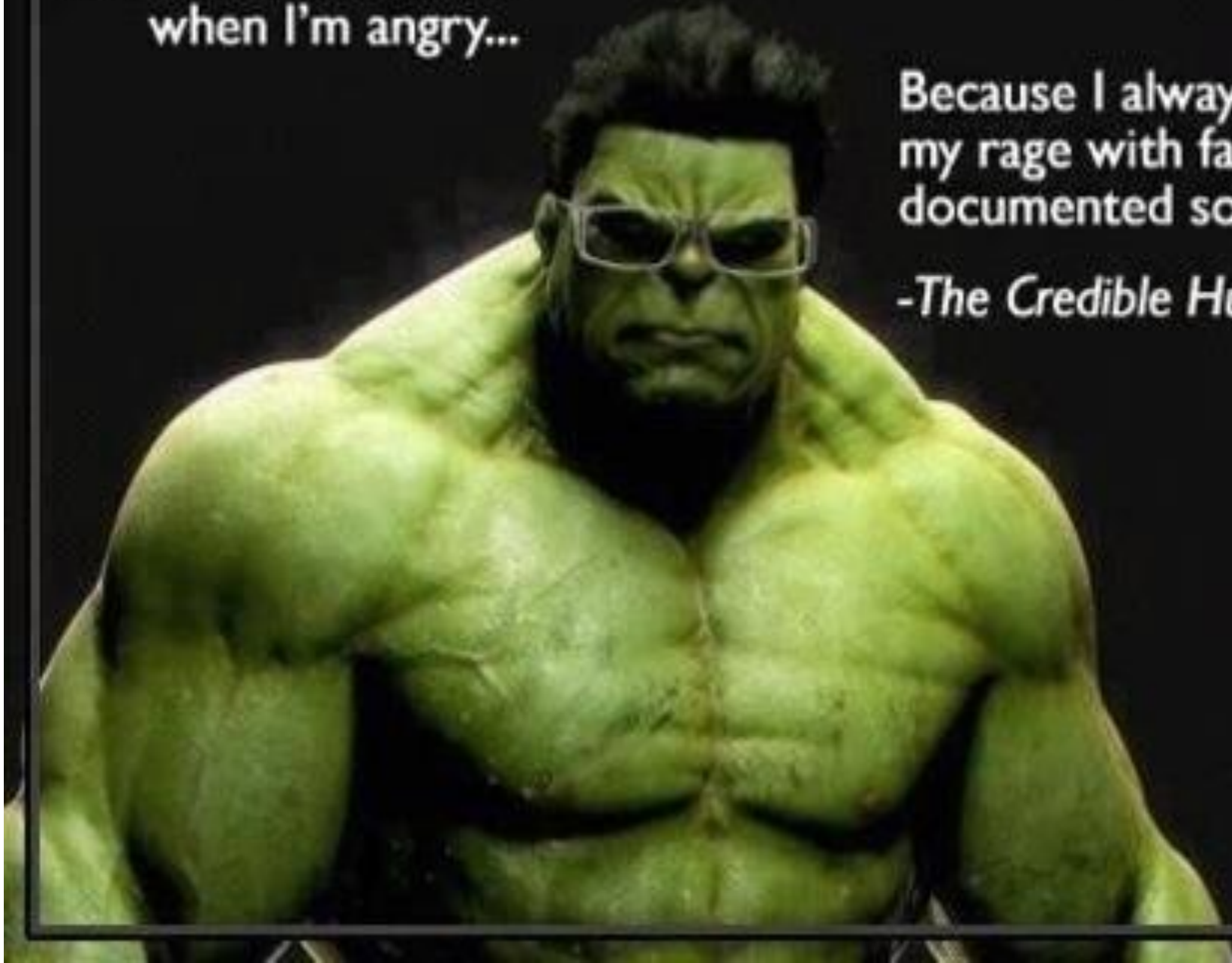
Process use of research

. . . engaging in the research process (through program evaluation, for instance), can lead to changes in ways of thinking, alter attitudes about the use of research and raise questions about the value of different kinds of knowledge and evidence.

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Research Evidence Matters!

You wouldn't like me when I'm angry...

Because I always back up my rage with facts and documented sources.

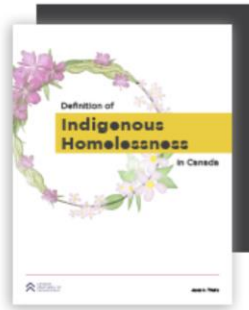-The Credible Hulk

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Part 2

Co-Produced Pathways to

IMPACT!

homeless
hub 10 years

Making research matter

Search the library   GO
Advanced Search

About Homelessness   **Library**   **Doing Research**   **Education**   **Community Profiles**   **Solutions**   **Our Work**   **Blog**

NEW RESOURCE:
DEFINITION OF INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS IN CANADA

Definition of
Indigenous
Homelessness
In Canada

#IndigenousHomelessness

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PDF

Preventing Youth Homelessness: An

Recent Blog Posts

7. Evaluation
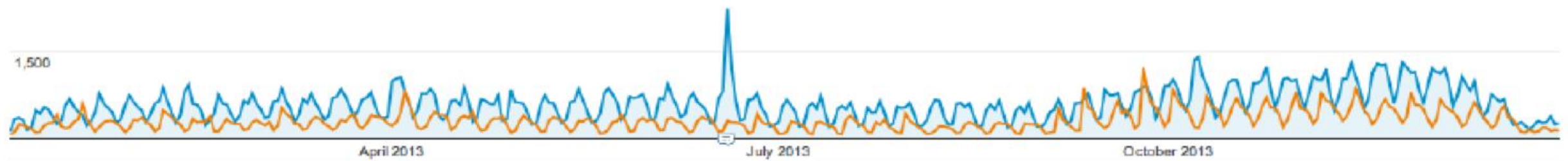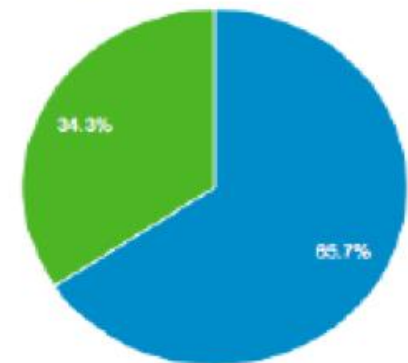
Figure 1a. Traditional Knowledge Mobilization Logic Model

Traditional Knowledge mobilization logic model

Activity → Output → Outcome → Impact
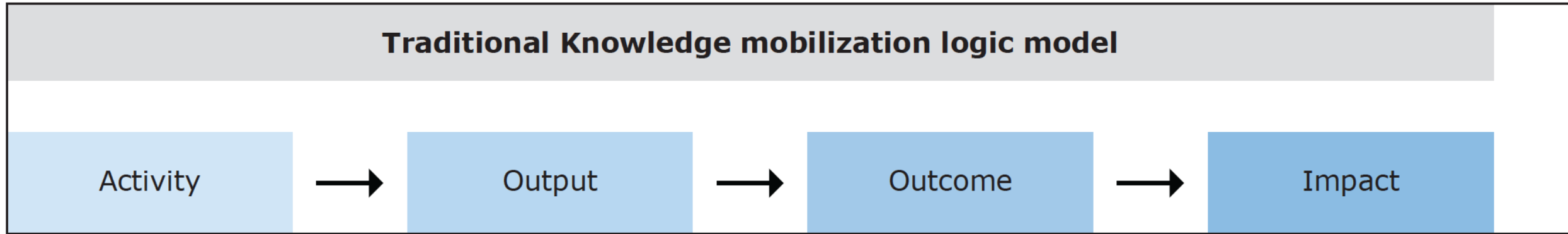
Figure 1b. Knowledge and Mobilization Logic Model

Knowledge mobilization logic model

Research → Dissemination → Uptake → Implementation → Impact
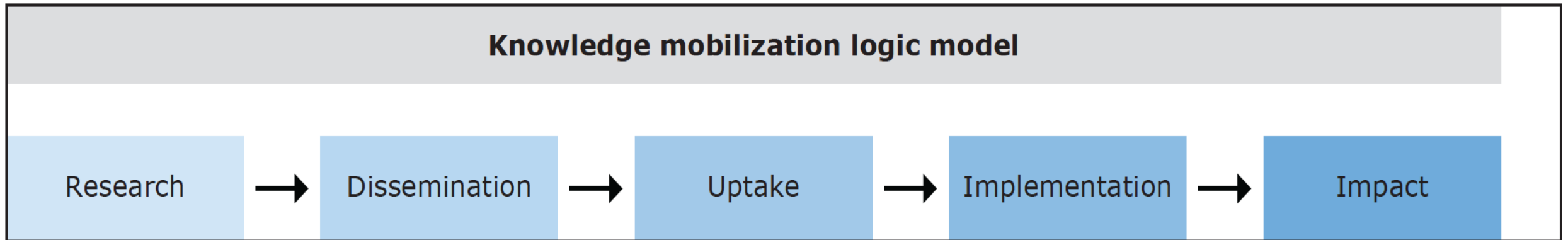
Co-Produced Pathways to Impact

David Phipps, Joanne Cummings, Debra Pepler, Wendy Craig, and Shelley Cardinal

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Part 3

The importance of

Partnership & Collaboration

Community Engaged Scholarship (CES)

Research involving mutually beneficial partnerships with peers in other sectors is referred to as Community Engaged Scholarship. Researchers apply their knowledge, and draw on the knowledge of their peers, to address real world questions and contribute to solutions and new ways of knowing.

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Research, Policy and Practice

Policy Makers

Researchers

Service Providers

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Barriers to Uptake

- Limitations of conventional mechanisms of knowledge dissemination

- Barriers to utilization by potential users (policy, practice).

- Lack of meaningful engagement between these different worlds.

- Divergent & sometimes conflicting institutional cultures, goals, timelines, processes and practices.

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Collaboration & Partnership

- Co-apps/Collaborators
- Institutional partners
- Decision Makers
- Policy Makers
- Lived Experience WG
- International relations
- Members/Supporters
- Funders

RESEARCH
Priority Areas

1. Systems Integration and Planning
2. Housing and Models of Support
3. Youth Homelessness
4. Indigenous Homelessness
5. Prevention
6. Legal and Justice Issues
7. Measuring Progress
8. Knowledge Mobilization

KNOWLEDGE
Mobilization

- Research Outputs
- Homeless Hub
- Marketing & Communications
- Sector engagement
- Government relations
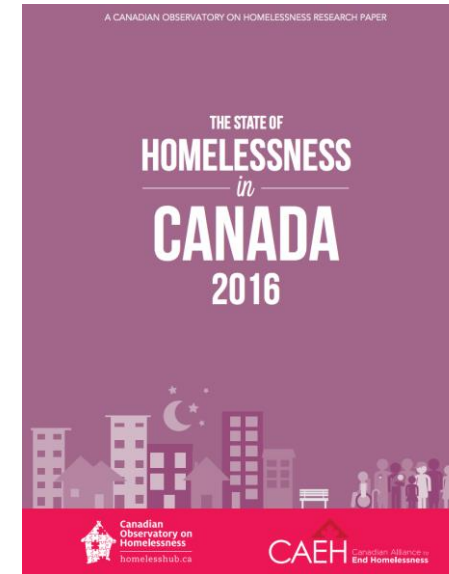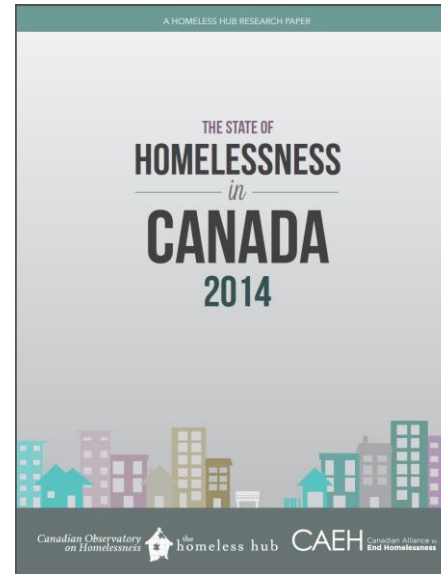- Training and Technical Assistance

RESEARCH IMPACT!

- Contributions to solutions to homelessness
- Better outcomes for people experiencing homelessness

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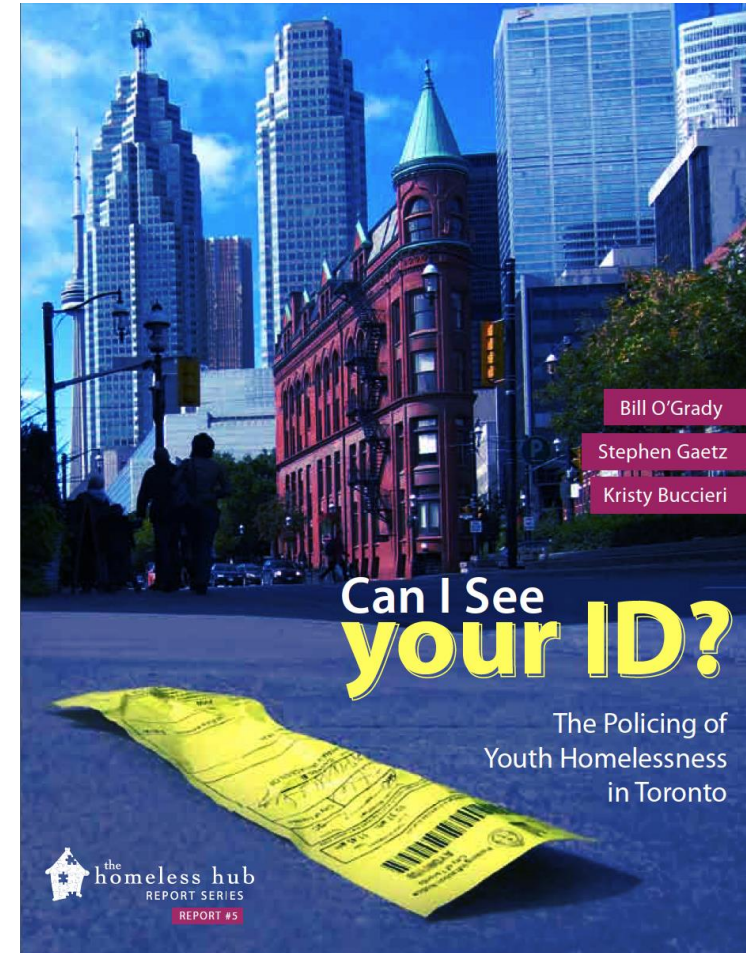
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Community Engaged **Scholarship**

Community Engaged **Scholarship**

Community Engaged **Scholarship**
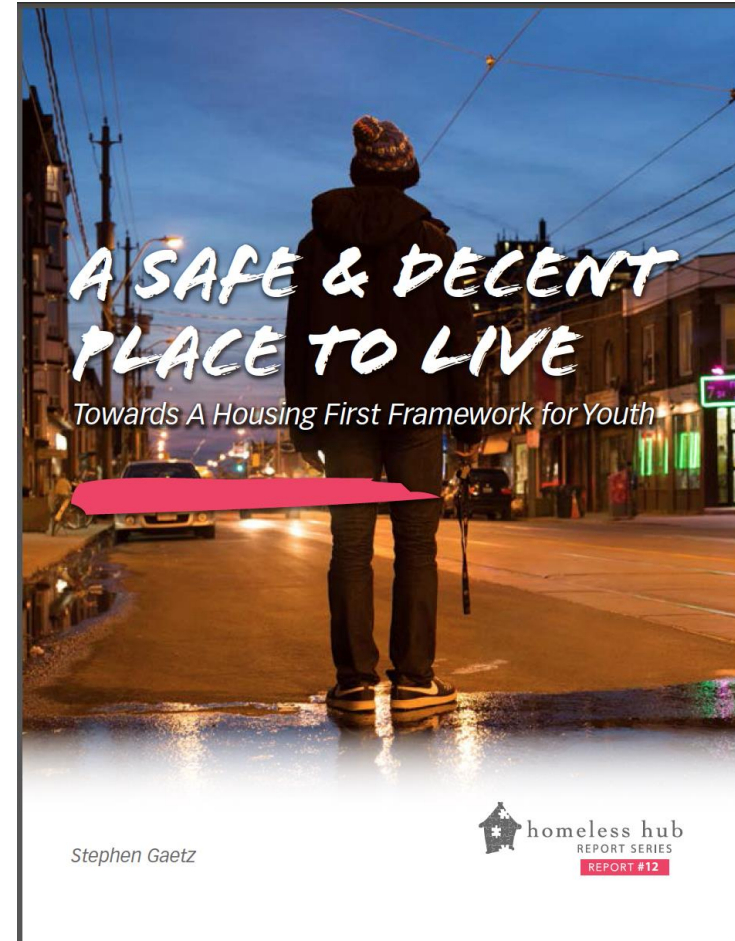
Key priorities of our co-created Research Agenda – 2014-16

- **Point in Time Count Toolkit**
- **Definition of youth homelessness**
- **Program Model Case Studies**
- **National Youth Homelessness Survey**
- **Data Management Support**
- **Prevention Framework**
- **Cost Effectiveness Study**

AGENDA

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Part 4

Youth Homelessness

Social Innovation Lab

Solving "Wicked Problems" through
Social Innovation

Attack of the
WICKED
PROBLEM
Horror Beyond Understanding!

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The youth homelessness space represents an ecosystem with high potential for learning
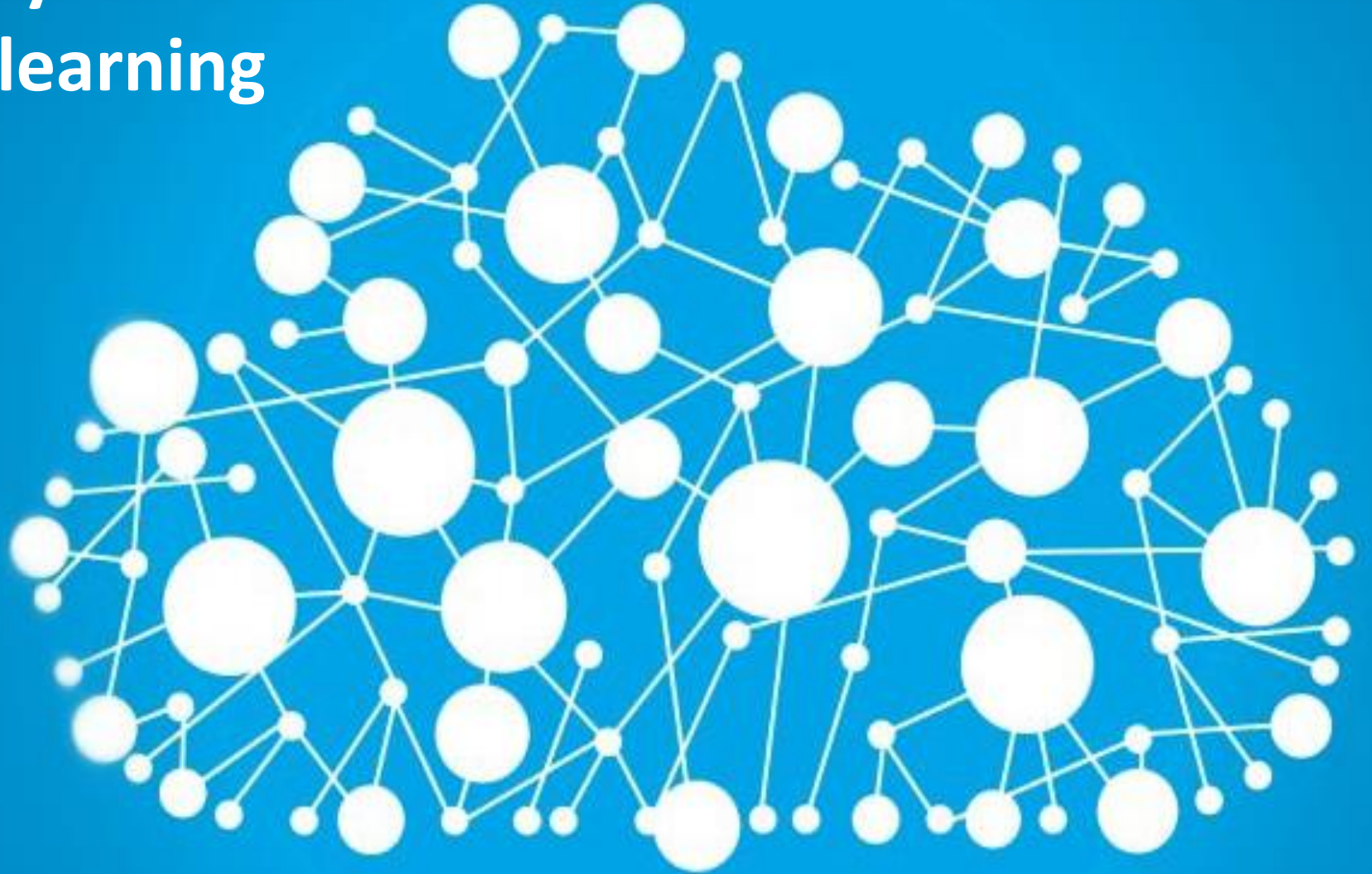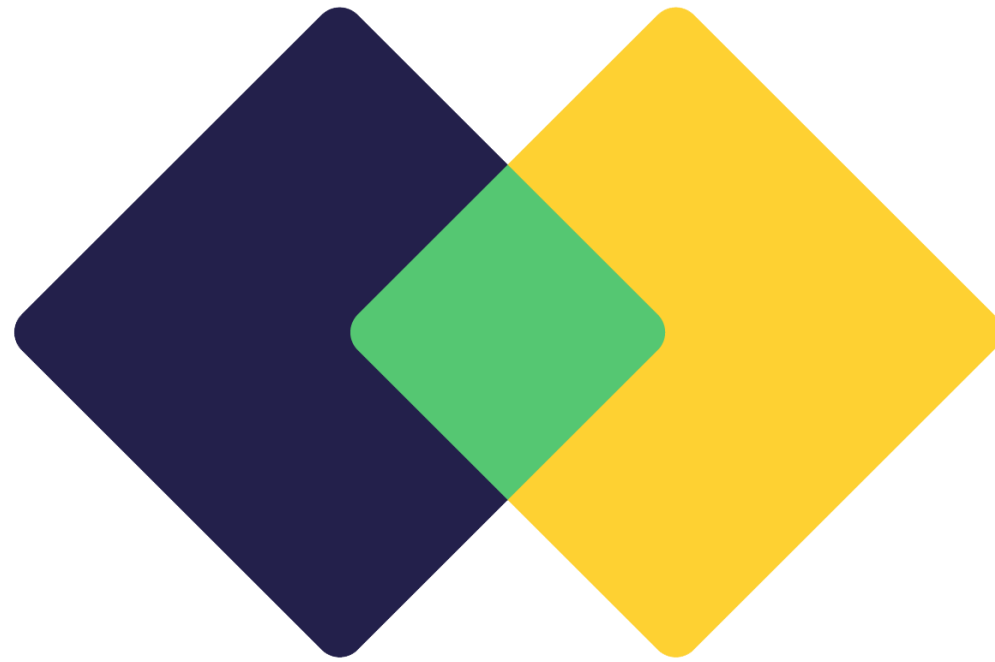
MAKING THE SHIFT

Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab

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The MtS Framework for KTEE is based on the "Co-Produced Pathways to Impact" (CPPI) model, emphasizing the necessity of listening to stakeholders and valuing deep collaborations between the university and non-academic partners.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Our work focuses on a singular goal:

to conduct and mobilize quality research that supports governments, communities and service providers to make the shift from managing the crisis of youth homelessness, to a focus on prevention and enabling sustainable exits from homelessness.

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1. The establishment of a youth homelessness Social Innovation Laboratory to support the development of the knowledge base to help communities make the shift to prevention. This includes exploring a range of funding and relationship models, including social finance tools, to foster collaboration across sectors.

2. Conducting a series of demonstration projects on evidence-based and evidence-informed prevention interventions, including Housing First for Youth to demonstrate program model effectiveness at preventing and ending youth homelessness.

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3. Providing youth participants with an intervention that will prevent and/or end their experience of homelessness. Individual outcomes include:
   - Enhanced educational participation and achievement
   - Stronger employment and labour market participation outcomes
   - Housing stability (tested quarterly)
   - Improved health and well-being
   - Strengthened family and community relations

4. Developing and disseminating to communities across Canada a comprehensive knowledge base on a range of systems-focused program models in the areas of prevention, housing and supports.

5. Informing homelessness policy and practice to support the scaling of effective youth homelessness prevention models and a Housing First model for Youth.

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STRATEGIES & MULTIFACETED SOLUTIONS

Networks and Partnerships
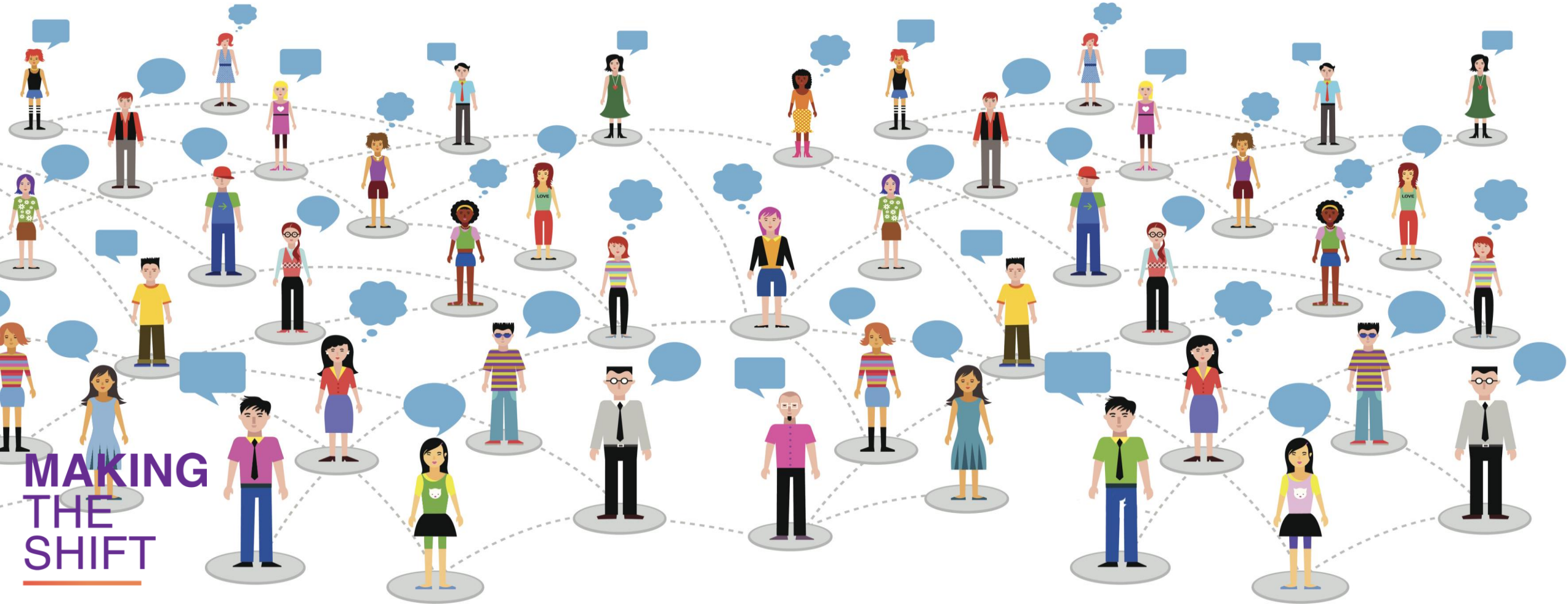
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PARTNERSHIPS

External to the Homelessness Sector

Within the Homelessness Sector

ABA — AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Baker McKenzie.

unicef canada

Canada

United Way Centraide

Canadian Mental Health Association — Association canadienne pour la santé mentale

MaRS | CENTRE FOR IMPACT INVESTING

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies

CAEH

RAISING THE ROOF | CHEZ TOIT — Long-term Solutions for Canada's Homeless

Covenant House

CHRA ACHRU

National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness

CHOICES FOR YOUTH

Boys & Girls Clubs of Calgary

Adoption Council of Canada — Conseil d'adoption du Canada

Egale CANADA

JohnHoward SOCIETY OF ONTARIO

Part 4

Research to Impact
Cycle
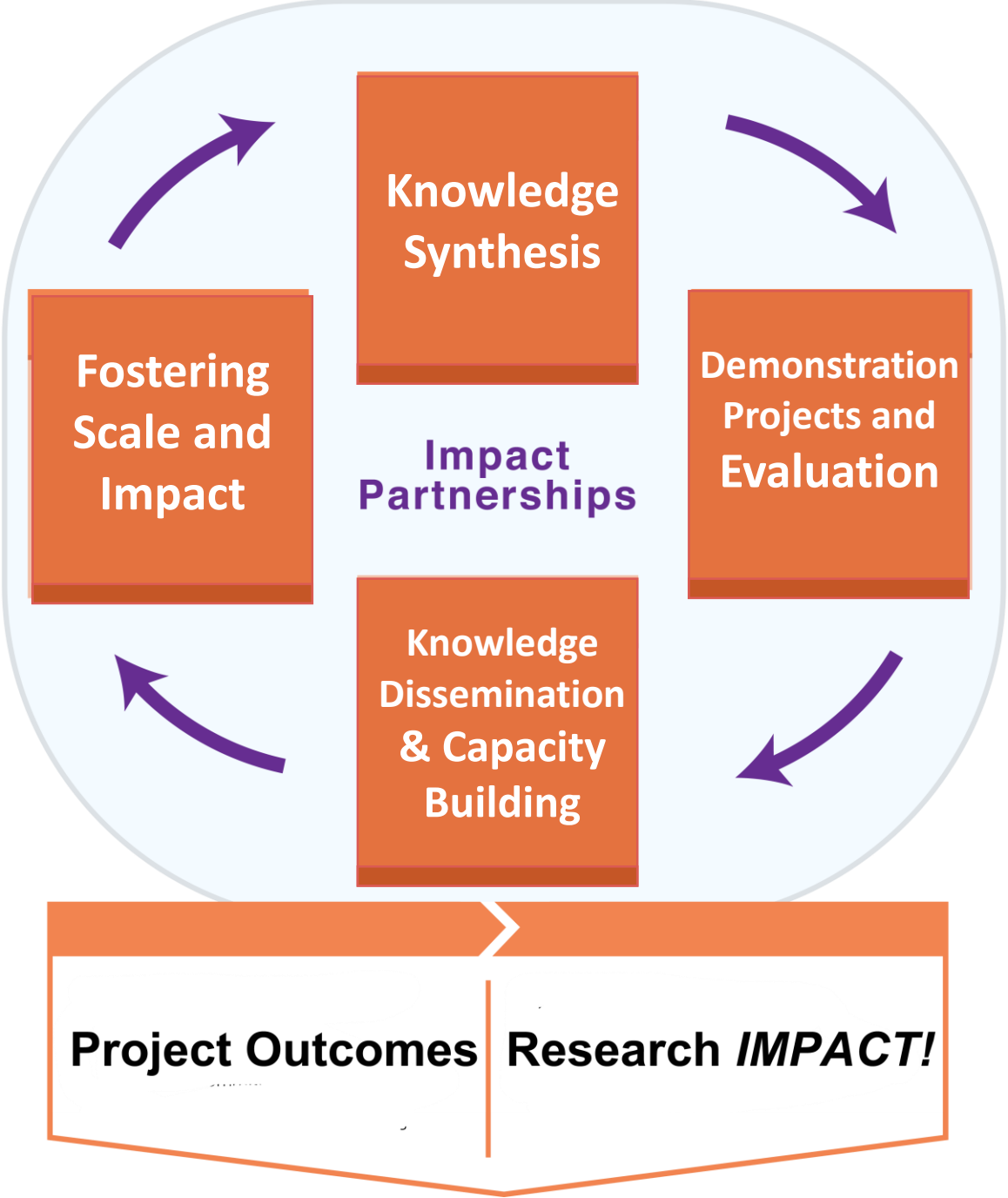
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Knowledge Synthesis

- Assessment of current knowledge base
- Gap analysis
- Identification of innovative policy and practice
- Prioritization for:
  - Research
  - Demonstration projects
  - Resource development

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What are the GAPS in knowledge?

Working with the sector ...

National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness
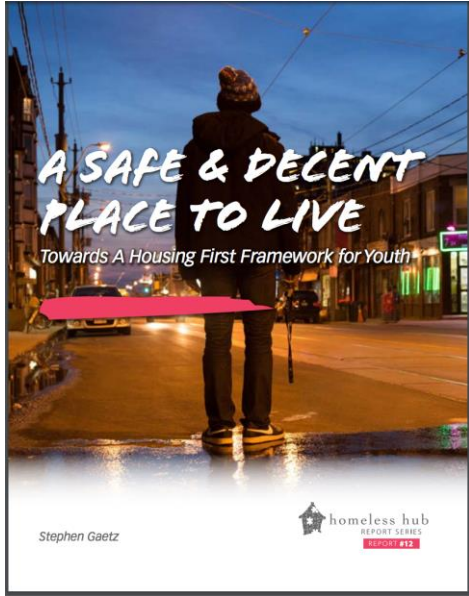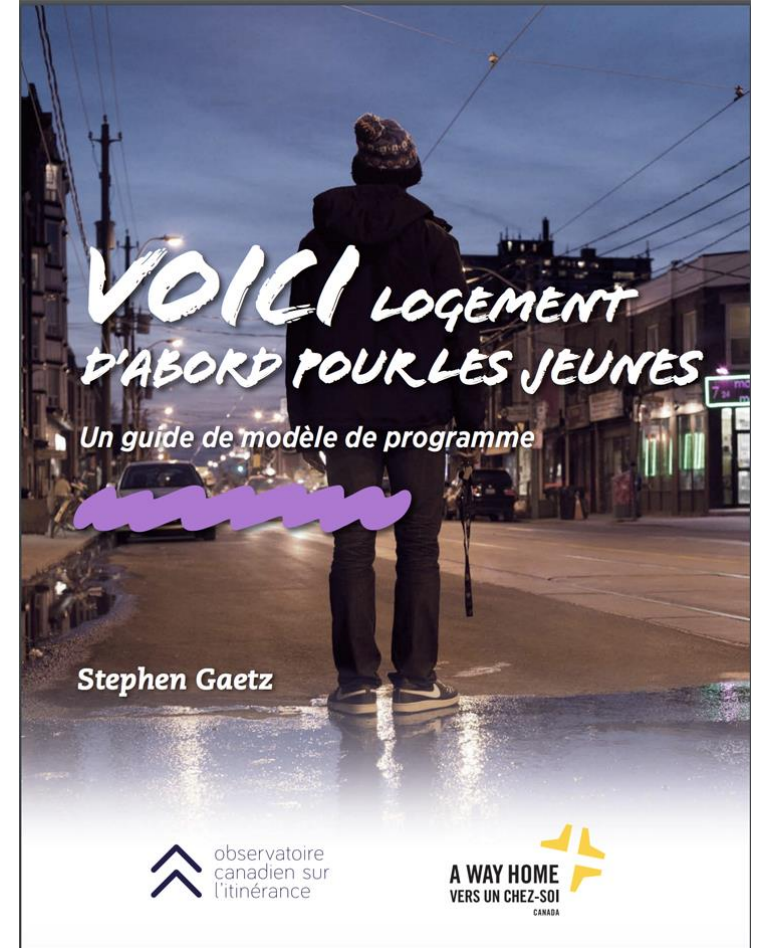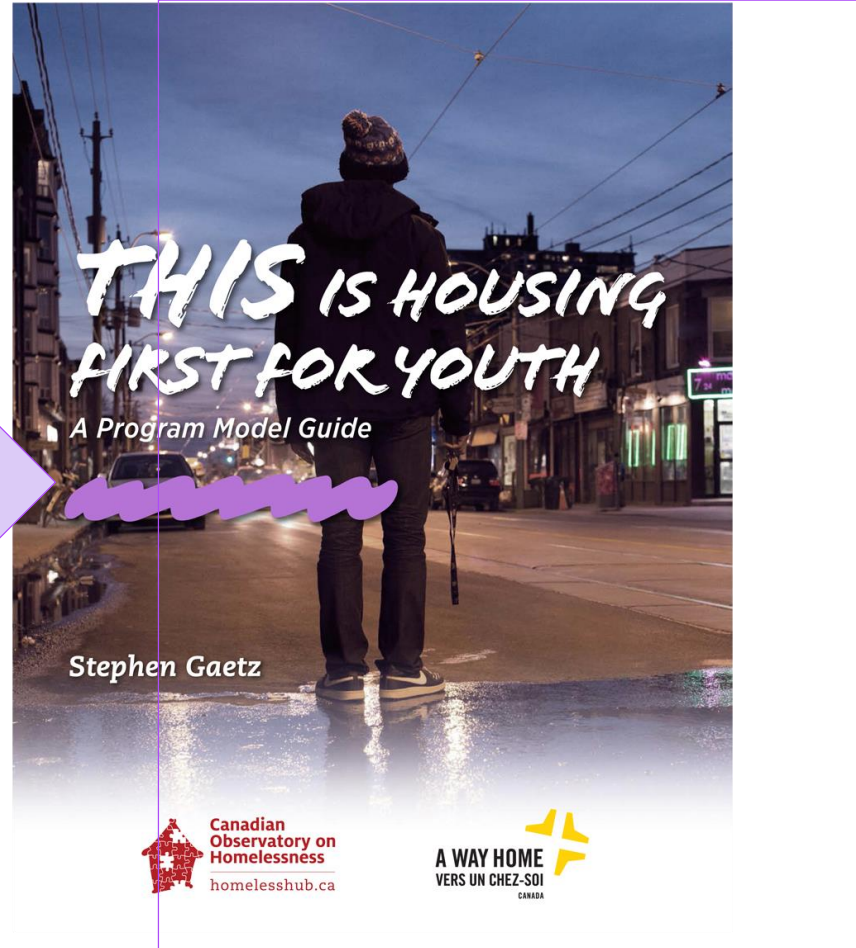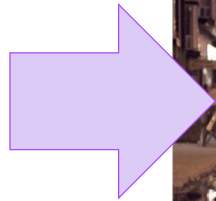
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2014

2017

Gaetz, Stephen (2014) *A Safe and Decent Place to Live: Towards a Housing First Framework for Youth*. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.

Gaetz, Stephen. (2017). THIS is Housing First for Youth: A Program Model Guide. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

International scan of evidence

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?
Youth Across Canada Speak Out on
Youth Homelessness Prevention

Kaitlin Schwan, Stephen Gaetz, David French,
Melanie Redman, Jesse Thistle, Erin Dej

2

Demonstration Projects and Evaluation

- Research and evaluation on program models
- Demonstration Projects
- Developmental and Outcomes evaluation
- Peer reviewed publication and dissemination of findings

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PREVENTION
Demonstration Projects

- **Enhancing Family and Natural Supports**
- **Youth Reconnect**
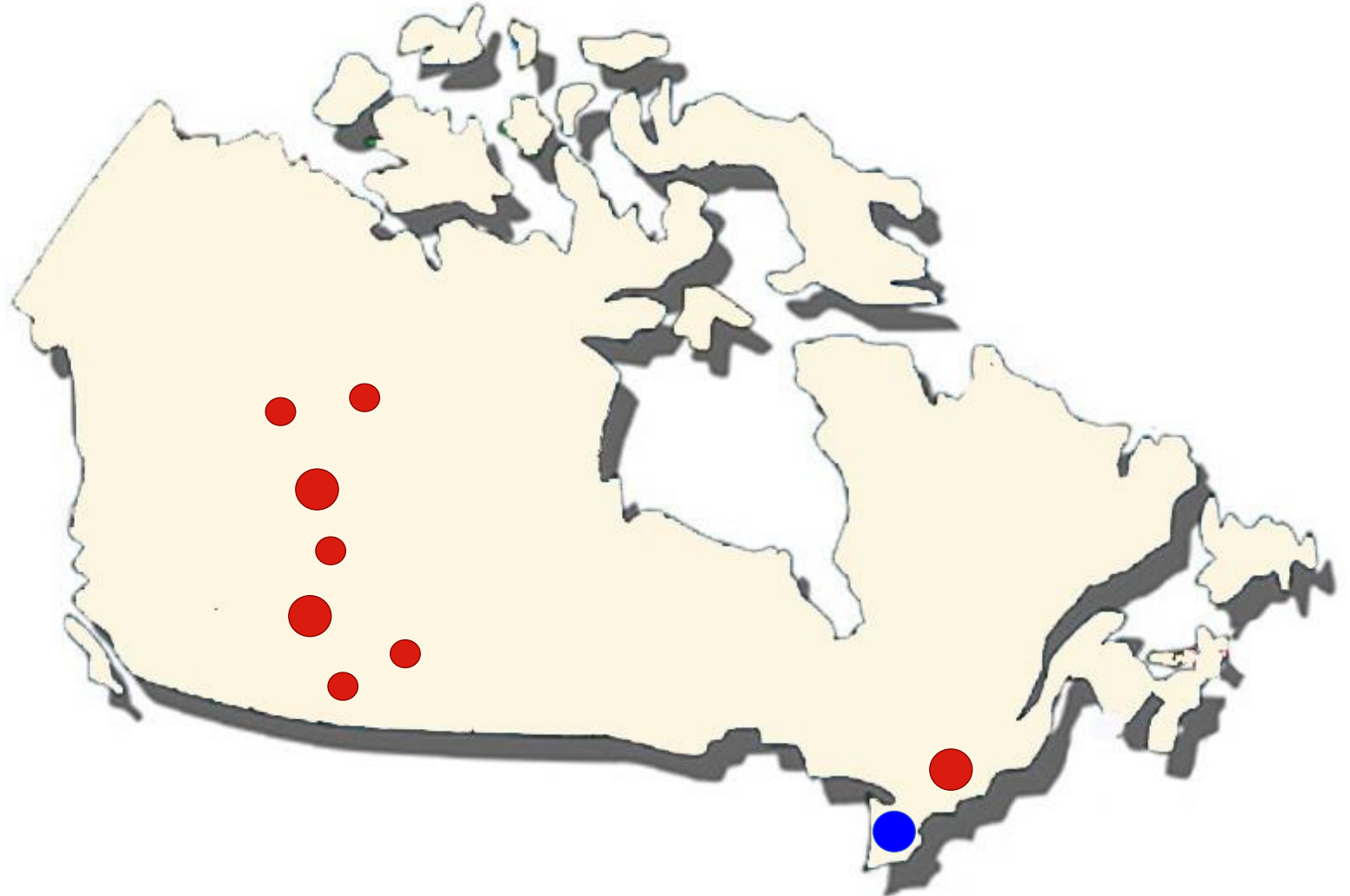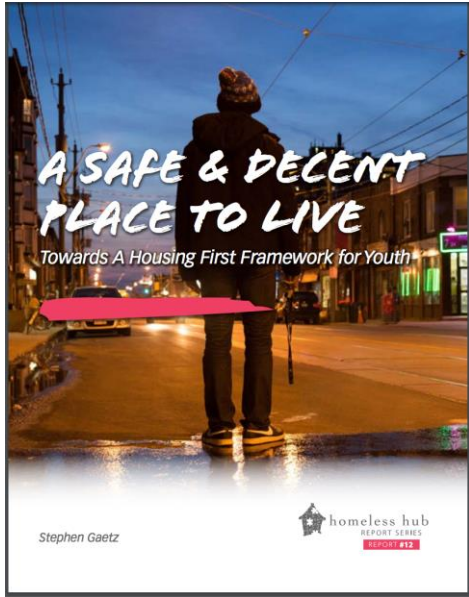
2014
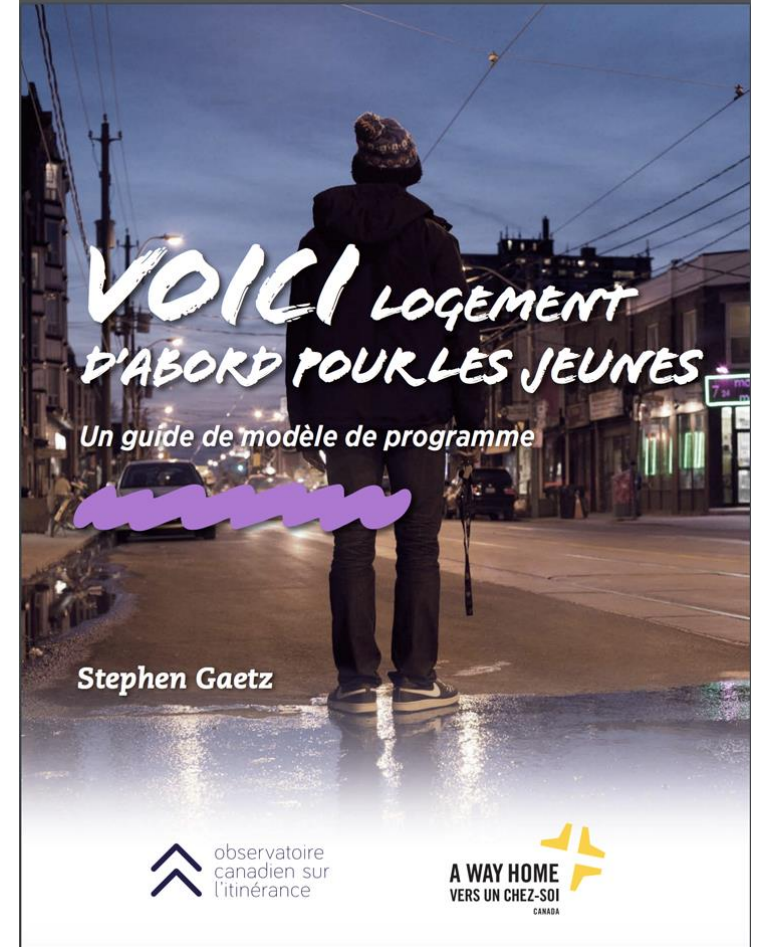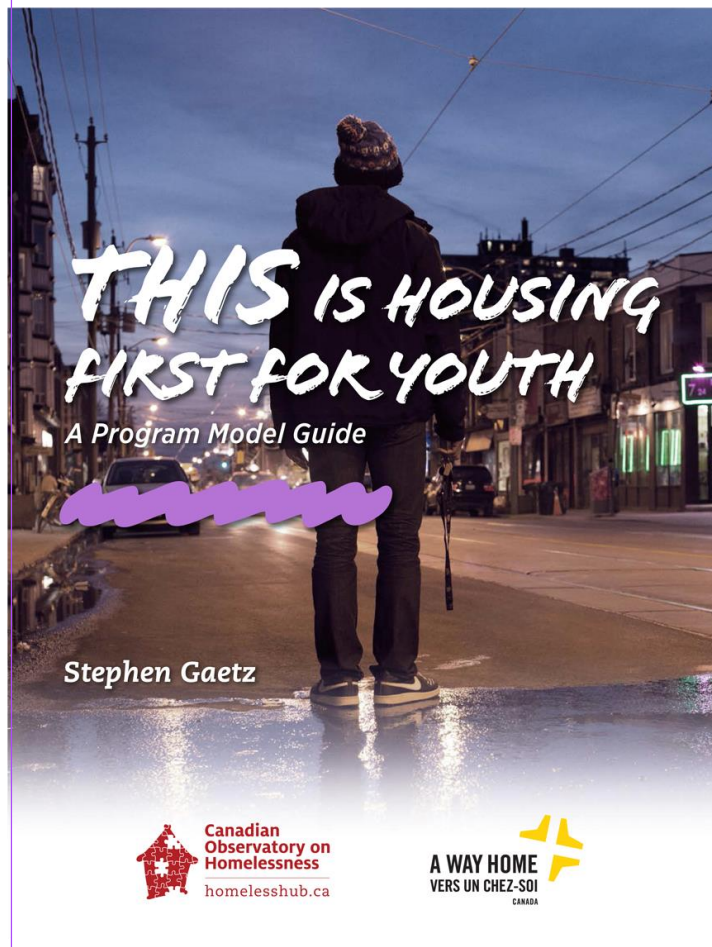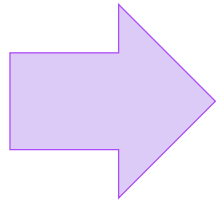
2017

Gaetz, Stephen (2014) *A Safe and Decent Place to Live: Towards a Housing First Framework for Youth*. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.

Gaetz, Stephen. (2017). THIS is Housing First for Youth: A Program Model Guide. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

3 Housing First for Youth
Demonstration Projects

Ottawa - Housing First for Youth

Toronto – PREVENTION focus: Housing First for Youth leaving care

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

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Program Design and Development

Research and Evaluation

Research:

- HF4Y Clinical Trial – interviews at three month intervals
- Control groups
- Quantitative and qualitative methods
- Outcomes tied to service and supports

Evaluation:

- Developmental Evaluation
- Outcomes Evaluation

Research
Planning
Analysis
Ideas
Solution
Strategy

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INDIGENIZING Programs and Research

"So many of our Indigenous young people have been impacted by various systems creating self doubt, low self esteem, insecurity, and a sense of worthlessness. Making the Shift has enabled us to focus on these areas to create a sense of community, an understanding of Indigenous Culture and identity and empowerment to know and feel they are not what the systems have dictated them to be".

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

Sheryl Green, Aboriginal Youth in Transition Worker

3

Knowledge Dissemination and Capacity Development

- Resource development
  - Program Model Guides
  - Toolkits
  - Policy briefs
  - Evaluation framework
- Communities of Practice
- Training and Technical Assistance
- KTEE / Homeless Hub
- Community "Living Lab"

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Resources

Training

FEANTSA Youth
Study Session 2017
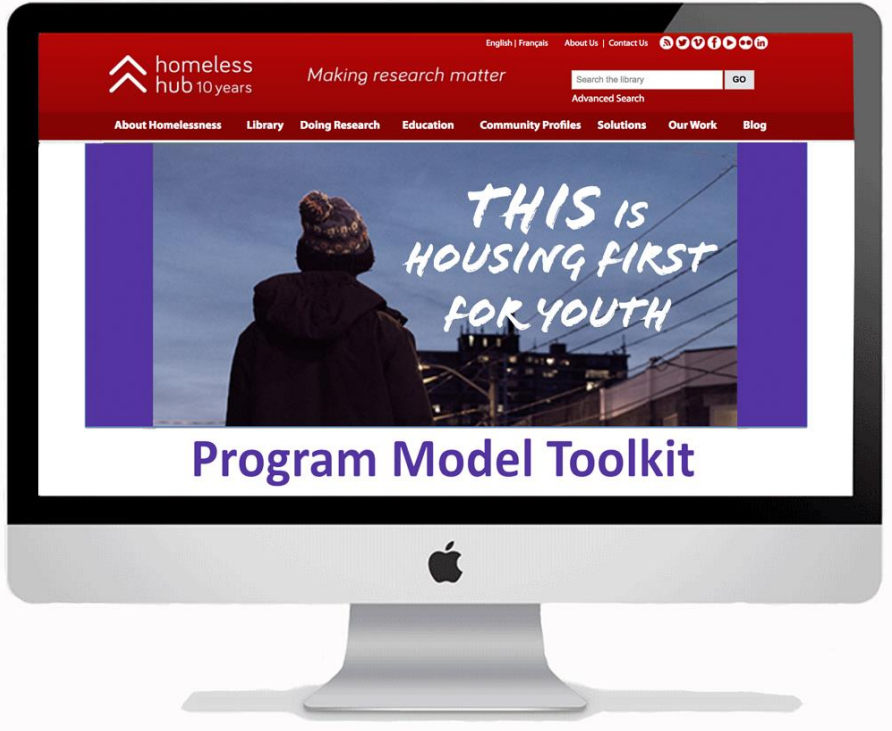
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Fostering Scale & Impact

- Communications and Marketing Strategy
- Community System Planning
- Community engagement strategy to identify local capacity and readiness
- Government relations strategy – policy & funding
- Private sector engagement & philanthropy

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Implementation Science

Community System Planning

A WAY HOME:
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS COMMUNITY PLANNING TOOLKIT

Ontario COH

Developed with support from
the Government of Ontario.

ALINA TURNER

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Government Relations

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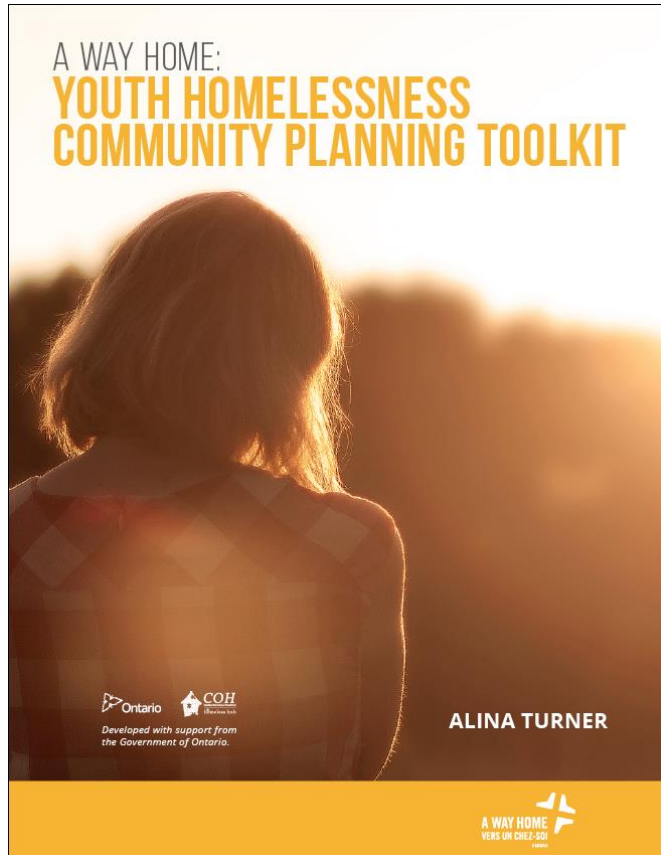
Research *IMPACT!*

The anticipated impact of addressing challenge(s)

Project Outcomes ▶ **Research *IMPACT!***

- Research demonstrating policy and practice effectiveness
- Uptake of better policy
- Uptake of better interventions
- Supporting communities to transition from crisis response to prevention and sustainable exits from homelessness

- **Reduction** in youth homelessness
- Enhanced housing stability, life changes & well-being
- Inclusion and strengthened natural supports
- Enhanced participation in employment, training & education

Maximizing uptake for the benefit of the Canadian population

MAKING THE SHIFT

OUTCOMES, IMPACT & BENEFITS

Where will we be in five years?

- We will be able to demonstrate the impact of our research agenda and outputs.

- We will have a solid understanding of the range of policy and practices supporting prevention and ending of youth homelessness.

- We will have conducted research and evaluation to build the knowledge base regarding what works, why, for whom and in what contexts.

- The knowledge we produce will be taken up by end users.

- We will begin to see the application of this knowledge to policy and practice.

- We will begin to see a reduction in youth homelessness

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Program outcomes

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

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

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

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

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

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Key Learning

"Making the shift is in all aspects giving our Indigenous young people an opportunity to grow and learn the tools necessary to achieve a balanced wholistic lifestyle and ultimately paving the way to preventing adult homelessness."

Sheryl Green, Aboriginal Youth in Transition Worker

Hamilton Regional Indian Centre

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INDIGENIZING Programs and Research

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Questions or Comments?
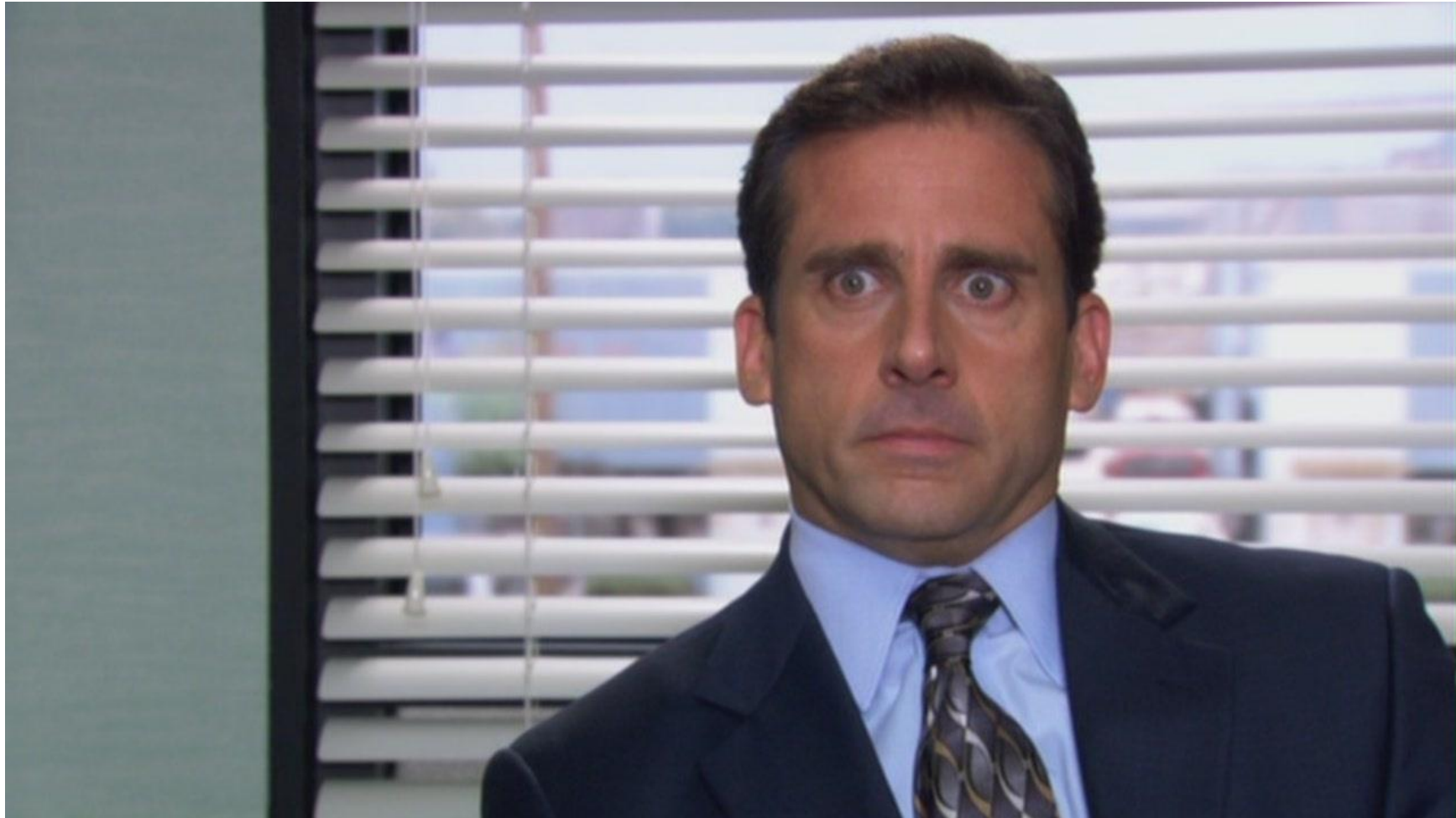
Checking our blind spots

November 6, 2018

CAEH

Matthew Morton, Ph.D.

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

VOICES OF YOUTH COUNT

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

NPR ▶ ⊕ New Study Finds That 4.2 Million Kids Experience Homelessness Each Year

Education
1 in 10 young adults has been homeless over the past year, survey

theguardian

world opinion sports soccer tech arts lifestyle fashion business travel environment ☰ all sections

US study finds 1 in 10 youth experience some form of homelessness

MotherJones

POLITICS ENVIRONMENT FOOD

EdSource
HIGHLIGHTING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
TOPICS COMMENTARIES PROJECTS DATA PUBLICATIONS

HUFFPOST

A national moment

Four Million Young People Were Homeless Last Year. Four Million.

Young, gay and living on the street: LGBT y face increased odds of homelessness

Black youth are 83 percent more likely to be without housing than other young people.

THE BALTIMORE SUN
SUBSCRIBE 4 weeks for 99

The CHRONICLE of SOCIAL CHANGE

YOUTH today

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Los Angeles Daily

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News / M

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Millions of Y

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Report Finds Youth Homele Rise, Asks Congress for Hel

LGBT YOUTH ARE 120% MORE LIKELY TO BE HOMELESS THAN STRAIGHT PEOPLE, STUDY SHOWS

f 𝕏 ✉

Thousands of Md. youth are homeless; African-American, LGBT youth represented disproportionately

★StarTribune

Chicago Tribune

NEWS
Young and homeless in America: Survey says the problem is worsening

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
  Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
  Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

In every American community, youth run away from home, are kicked out of their house, exit the juvenile justice system with nowhere to go, become orphans, or exit the child welfare system with no support to enable successful transitions to adulthood. Homeless children and youth are at high risk for developing physical, behavioral, and emotional problems and also becoming victims of sex and labor trafficking. Without assistance, homeless youth often end up in the justice system, and don't have the means to get effective help. Addressing the needs of homeless children and youth is a critical investment in our children's future.

A November 2017 ground-breaking report from the University of Chicago found that 4.2 million young people experienced homelessness in America over a 12-month period. This means that 1 in 10 young adults aged 18-25, and at least 1 in 30 adolescents aged 13-17, experienced some form of homelessness unaccompanied by a parent or guardian over the course of a year. Importantly, it also revealed that homelessness is just as much of a challenge in rural communities as it is in urban communities and that youth without a high school degree or GED are 4.5 times more likely to experience homelessness. Recent data from the National Human Trafficking Hotline also shows

Bring Others In
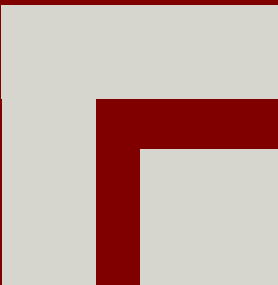
A public-private partnership

Voices of Youth Count is an national, mixed-methods research and policy initiative linking evidence to action to end youth homelessness.

22 partner communities
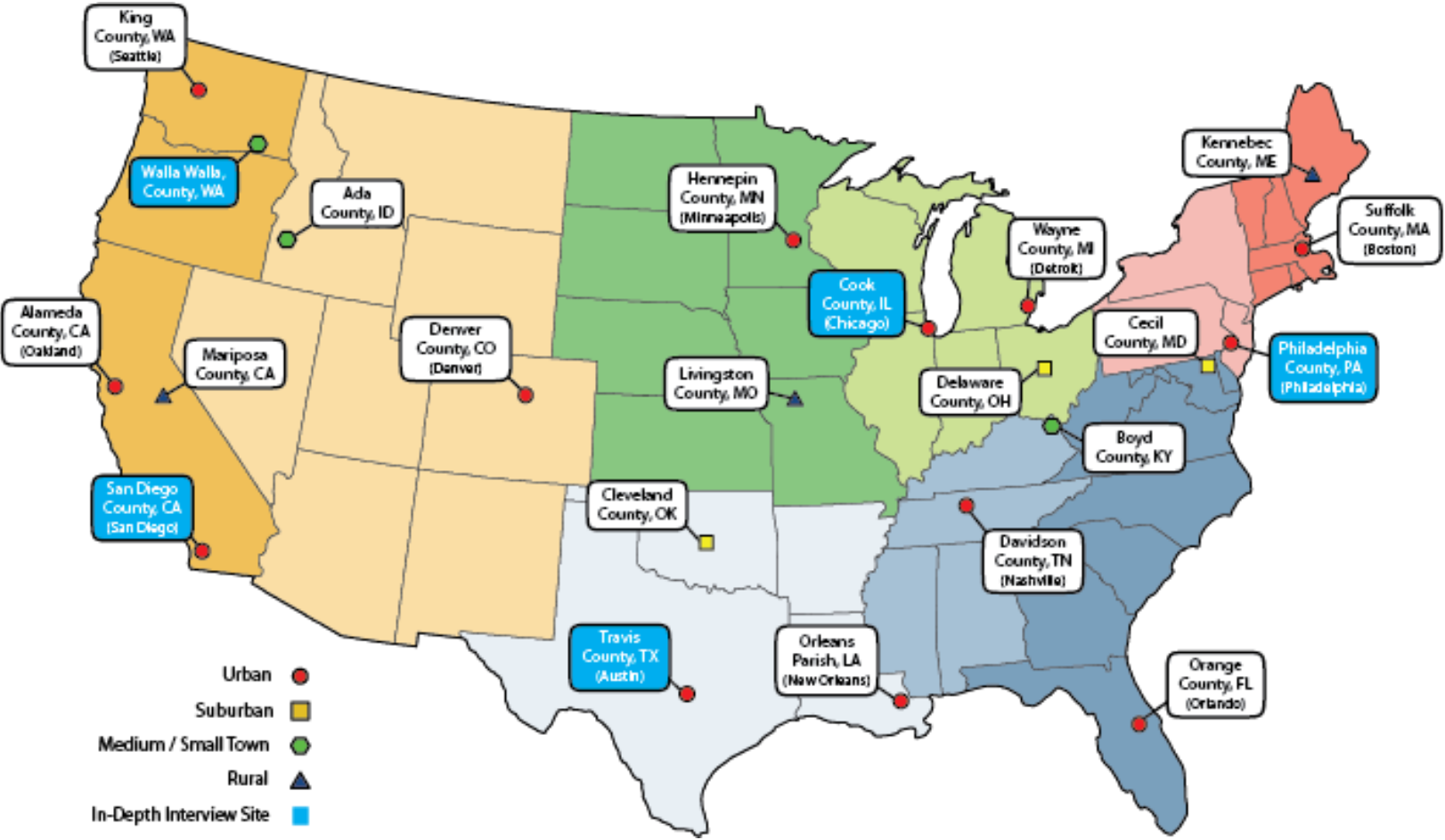
A multi-component approach

COUNTS
- 22 counties
- 4k+ youth surveys
- 500+ provider surveys

PREVALENCE
- 26k surveys
- 150 follow-up interviews

Ending Youth Homelessness

INTERVIEWS
- 215 in-depth youth interviews

REVIEWS
- 57 evaluations
- Policy analysis & consultations

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Elevate the Punchlines

Missed Opportunities: Youth
Homelessness in America

National Estimates

The first
Hall at th
addressi

Missed Opp
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being kicked
ages 18-25,
homelessne
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potential and

voicesofyouthcount.org

Missed Opportunities: LGBTQ
Youth Homelessness in America

The second i
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and address

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and nontransgend
the nearly 4.2 milli
homelessness dur
other adversities.
to better meet the
homelessness.

Missed Opportunities: Pregnant
and Parenting Youth Experiencing
Homelessness in America

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JOURNAL OF
ADOLESCENT
HEALTH

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Original article

Prevalence and Correlates of Youth Homelessness in the United States

CrossMark

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See Related Editorial p. 1

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IMPLICATIONS AND
CONTRIBUTION

This paper reports U.S.

Conducting a Youth Count: A Toolkit

Empowering and Engaging Youth and Communities For a Better Count

Missed Opportunities:
Counting Youth Experiencing
Homelessness in America

July 2018

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more communities

voicesofyouthcount.org

Missed Opportunities: Youth
Homelessness in Rural America

October 2018

The fifth in a series of Research-to-Impact briefs by Chapin
Hall at the University of Chicago on understanding and
addressing youth homelessness.

In Voices of Youth Count's first Research-to-Impact brief, researchers estimated that
nearly 4.2 million youth and young adults in America experienced some form of
homelessness during a 12-month period. *Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness
in Rural America* highlights research related to the specific experiences of young
people who reside in the vast areas of the country that have fewer people and more
widely dispersed services. The findings show that rural youth homelessness is just as
prevalent as homelessness in urban areas. However, in rural areas, youth experiences
of homelessness are more likely to be hidden, and these youth face unique challenges
accessing education, jobs, services, and support.

October 2016

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

VOICES OF
YOUTH
COUNT

A broad & hidden challenge

1 in 10

young adults ages 18 to 25 endures some form of homelessness in a year. Half of the prevalence involves couch surfing only.

1 in 30

adolescent minors ages 13 to 17 endures some form of homelessness in a year. A quarter of the prevalence involves couch surfing only.

Rates of youth experiencing homelessness were similar in rural and nonrural areas.

Youth 13-17	Young Adults 18-25
4.2% Household prevalence in urban counties.	**9.6%** Population prevalence in urban counties.
4.4% Household prevalence in rural counties.	**9.2%** Population prevalence in rural counties.
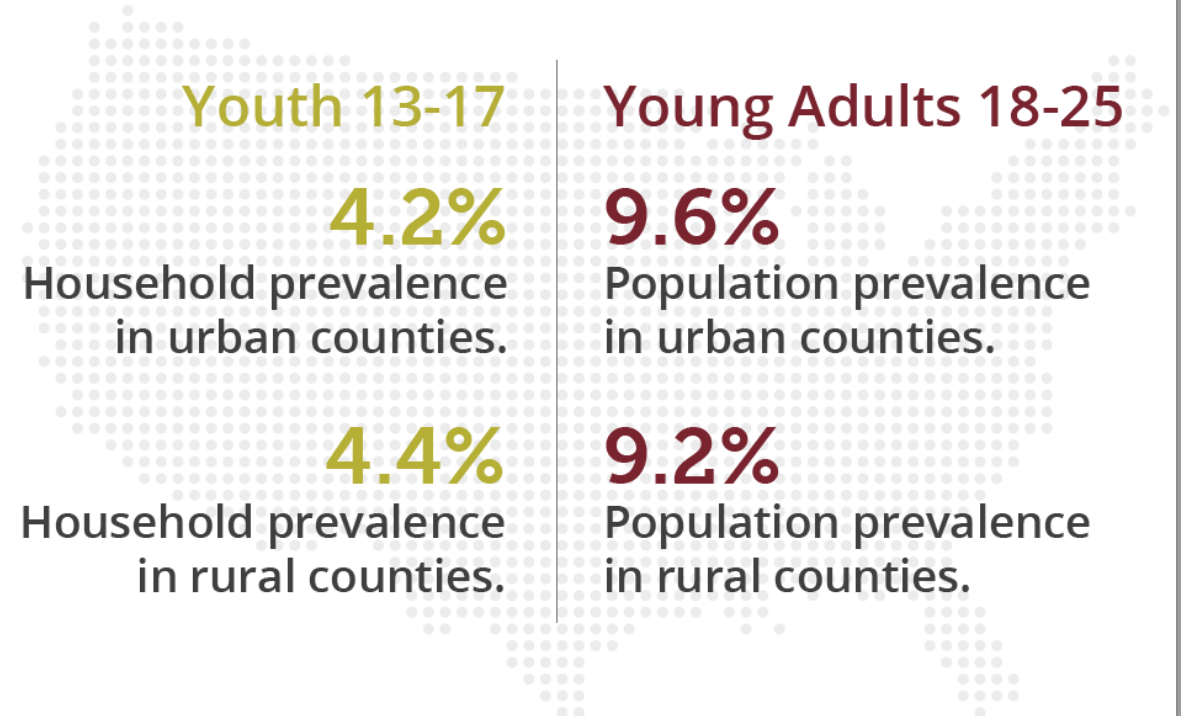
(Source: VoYC National Survey)

Rural youth homelessness looks different

Where youth experiencing homelessness stayed on the night of the youth count.

Youth in large counties

Youth in small counties

20% | 40% | 22% | 28% | 50% | 23%

Staying with others

Unsheltered

Sheltered

Source: VoYC Brief Youth Survey

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
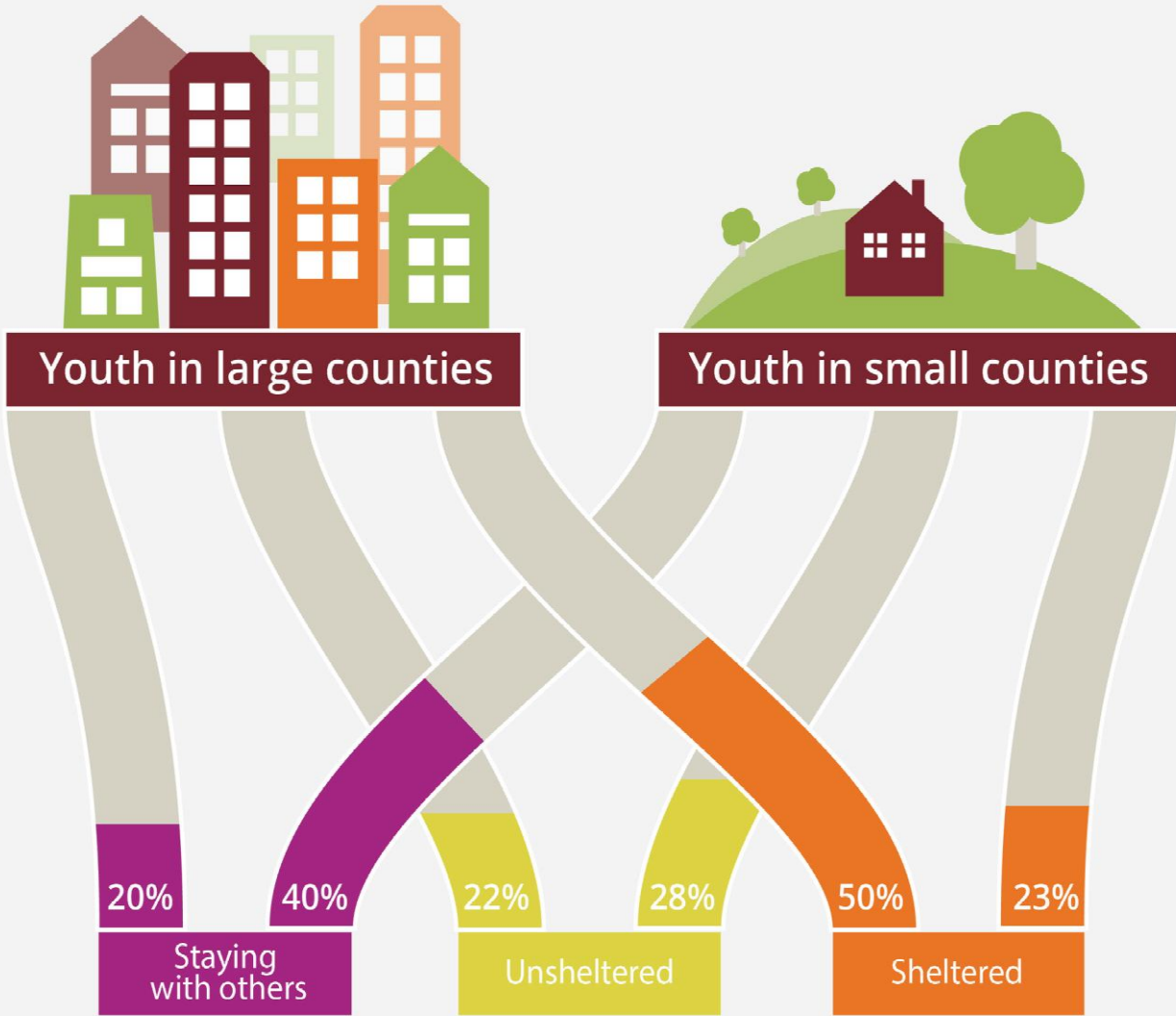
Subpopulations with higher risk for homelessness

346%
Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a 346% higher risk

120%
LGBT youth had a 120% higher risk

162%
Youth reporting annual household income of less than $24,000 had a 162% higher risk

33%
Hispanic, non-White youth had a 33% higher risk

83%
Black or African American youth had an 83% higher risk

200%
Unmarried parenting youth had a 200% higher risk

(Source: VoYC National Survey)

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Among youth experiencing homelessness, LGBTQ had especially high exposure to many adversities

Forced to have sex
38%

Exchanged sex for basic needs
27% 9% 15%

Exposed to discrimination or stigma outside of the family
37%

62%

LGBTQ

NON-LGBTQ

Physically harmed by others
47%

60%

15% 25%

Harmed self

Exposed to discrimination or stigma within the family
37%

64%
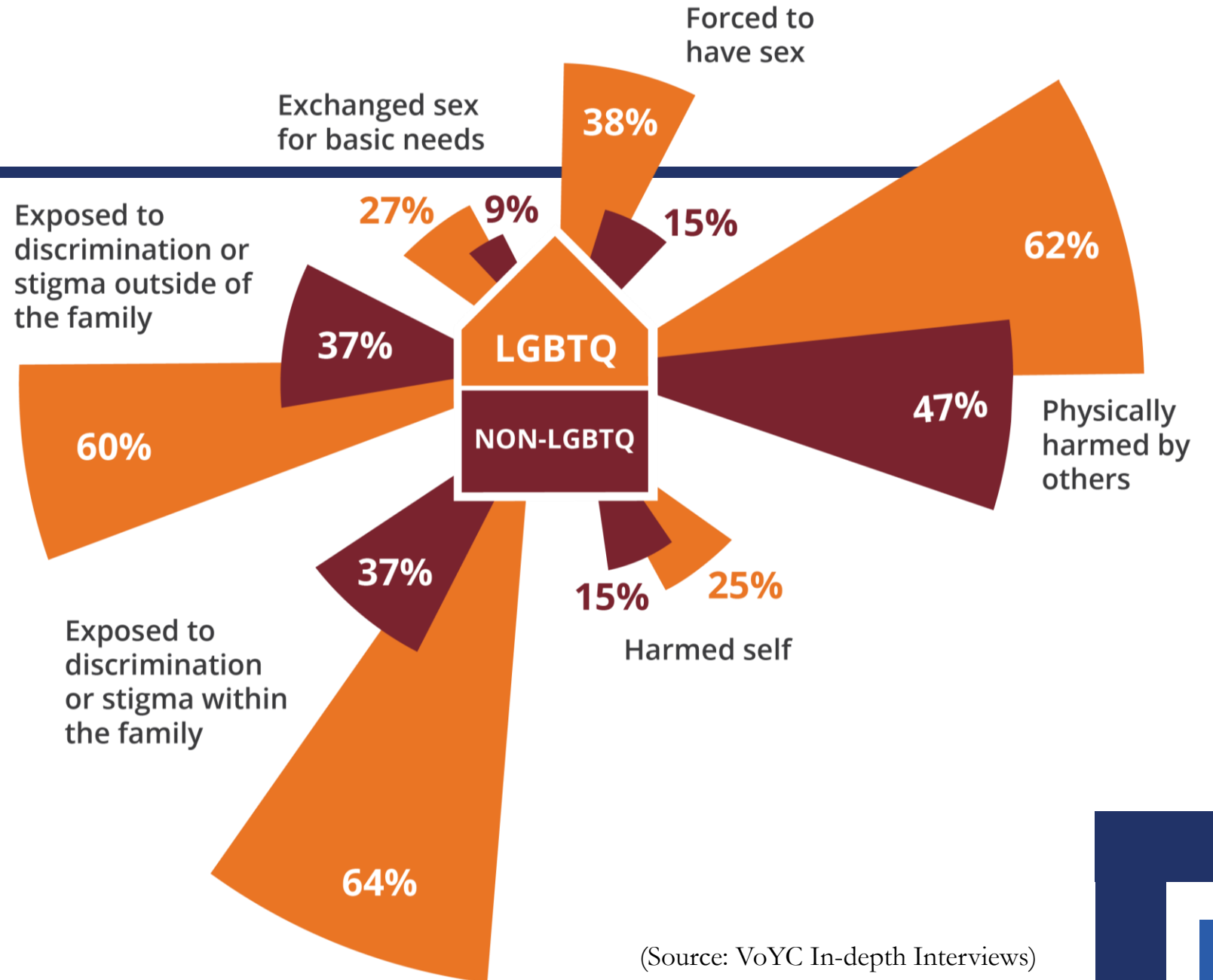
(Source: VoYC In-depth Interviews)

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Blurry lines: youth & family homelessness

44%

10%

18%

3%

| 13-17 | 18-25 | 13-17 | 18-25 |
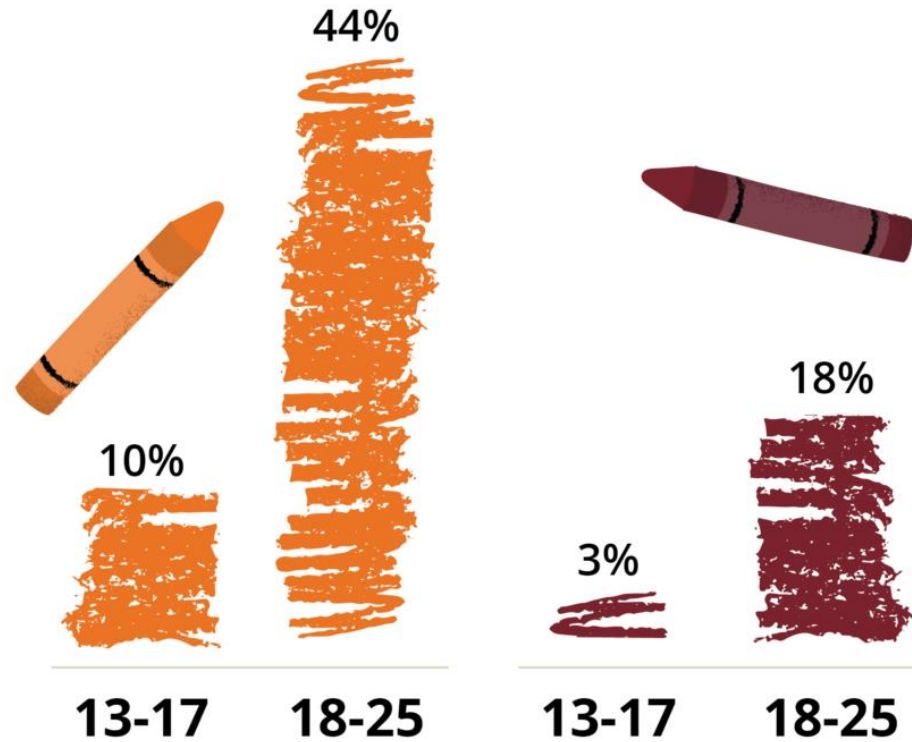
FEMALES
are pregnant or
a parent

MALES
have a pregnant partner
or are a parent

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

(Source: VoYC Brief Youth Surveys)

Tell a Bigger Story

Missed opportunities
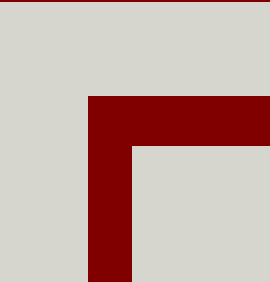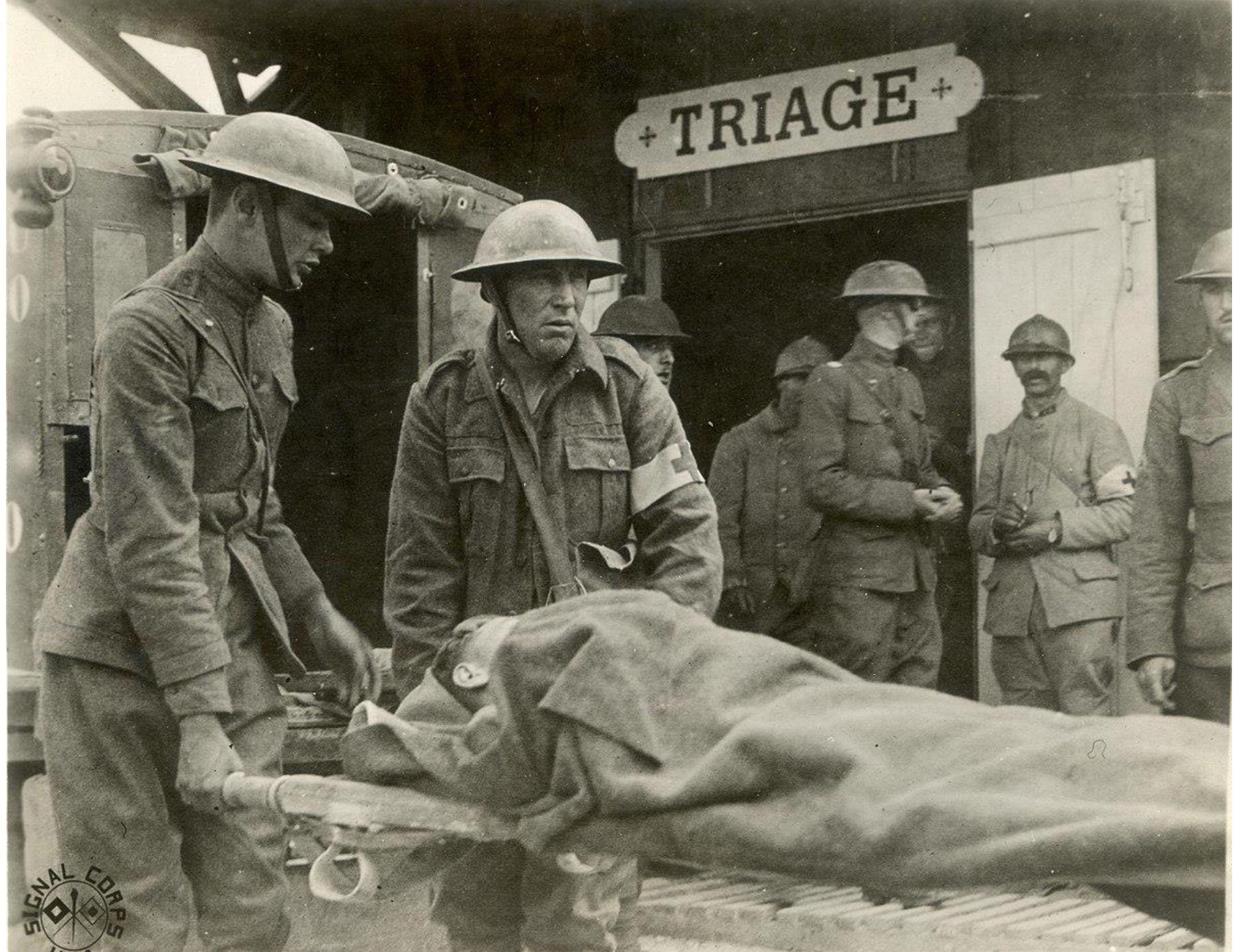
3 in 4 homeless young adults first experienced homelessness as minors.

Only **1 in 3** youth assessed by homelessness systems get a housing program.

WE KNOW **which youth are at greatest risk** for homelessness.

The **longer** youth experience homelessness the **harder** it is for them to exit.

Youth homelessness is **the most common pathway** into adult homelessness.

A public health perspective

Crisis response

Traditionally the focus of policy

Prevention

Early intervention

High risk & chronic

Sustained exits
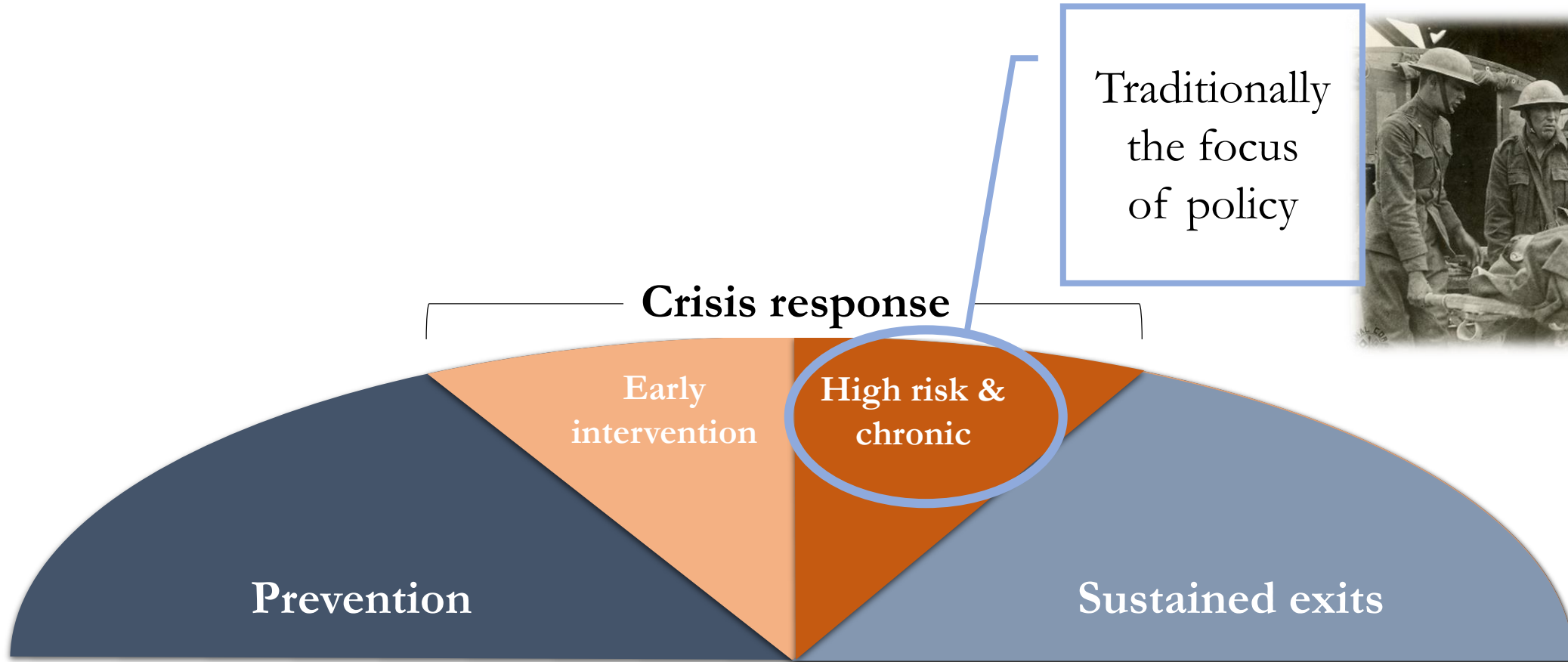
Opportunities across the continuum for research & action

- Better "front doors" & coordinated entry
- Strengths-based assessment & navigation

- Temporary housing
- Non-housing supports

- Low-barrier permanent housing options

- Address structural racism
- Reform public systems
- Screening & support

Crisis response

- Ongoing support
- Cross-sector service delivery

Prevention

Early intervention

High risk & chronic

Sustained exits

CHAPIN HALL
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Thank you

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@mhmorton

Knowledge to Action: Mobilising Research to Impact on Policy

David Mackenzie
Upstream Project Australia [UPA]

Associate Professor, School of Psychology, Social Work & Social Policy, University of South Australia; Chair of Youth Development Australia Ltd; Director of the Upstream Project Australia consortium.

We all work in silos

Dept of Justice

Dept of
human services

Dept of
Education

... researchers & academics

Dept of Justice

Dept of human services

Dept of Education

University researchers

CHANGE MATRIX

RESEARCH

DEVELOPMENT

	NO	YES
NO	▪ **Existing service system status quo;** ▪ **Largely crisis-oriented;** ▪ **Not involved with R or D;** ▪ **Business as usual.**	
YES		

CHANGE MATRIX

RESEARCH

	NO	YES
NO	▪ Existing service system status quo; ▪ Largely crisis-oriented; ▪ Not involved with R or D; ▪ Business as usual.	
YES	▪ Services put up funding proposal for 'new; service models; ▪ Not usually strongly evidence-based; ▪ Agency-focused.	

DEVELOPMENT

CHANGE MATRIX

RESEARCH

DEVELOPMENT

	RESEARCH	
	NO	**YES**
NO	• Existing service system status quo; • Largely crisis-oriented; • Not involved with R or D; • Business as usual.	• University research projects; • On service system; • Not necessarily strong with policy recommendations • Weak on development.
YES	• Services put up funding proposal for 'new; service models; • Not usually strongly evidence-based; • Agency-focused.	

What is a social problem?

> Social problems are not just out there as objective realities; social problems are constructed by human actors making claims about what is a problem and what should be done about it

Donileen Loseke – *Thinking about Social Problems*

NUMBERS
'Size of problem'

DEFINITIONS
Typifications

CLAIMS
& claims-making

WARRANTS
& grounds
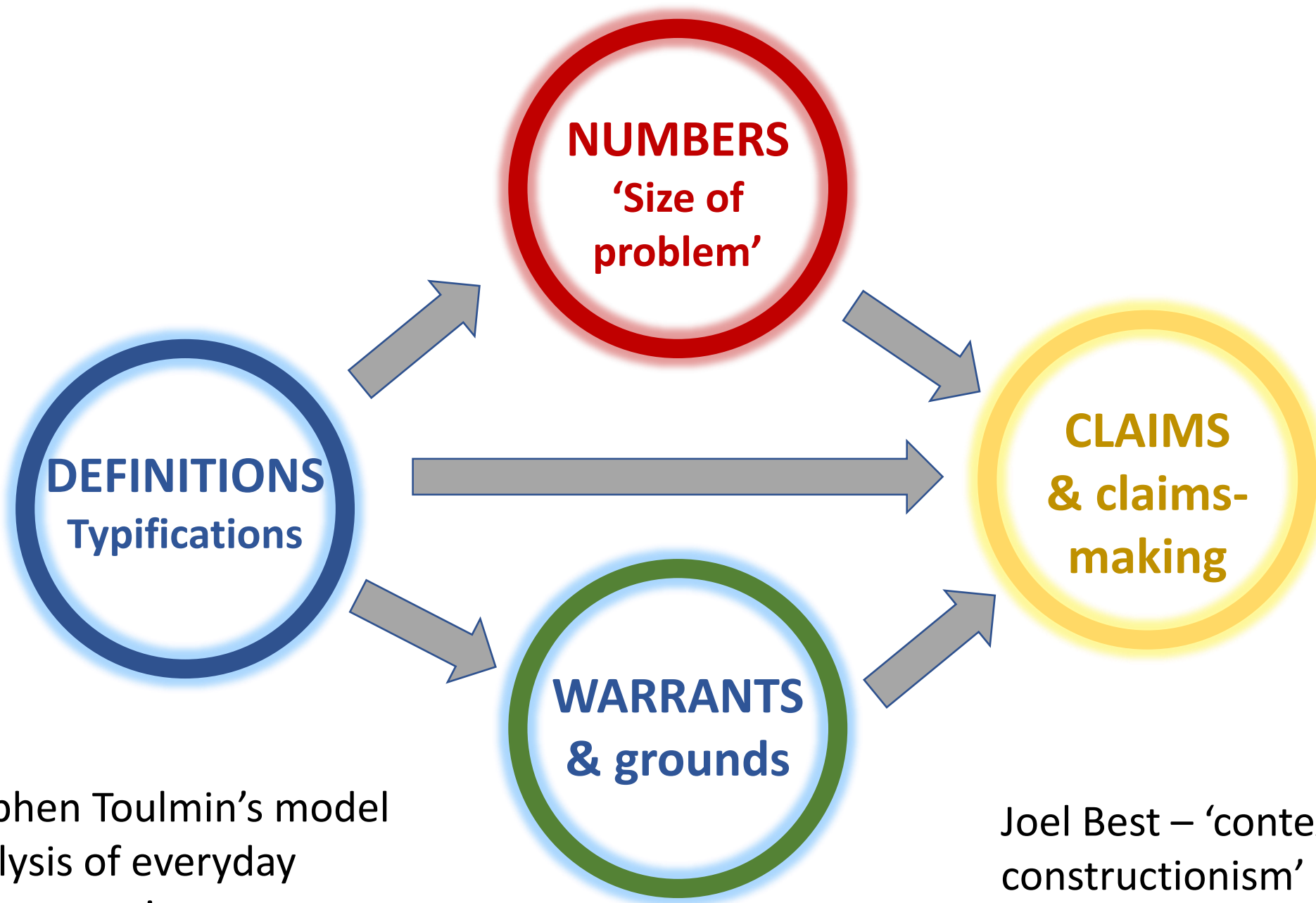
Stephen Toulmin's model analysis of everyday argumentation

Joel Best – 'contextual constructionism'

Cultural Definition of Homelessness?

> **...homelessness and inadequate housing are socially constructed cultural concepts that are located in time and in certain social and cultural contexts. The concepts are socially relative in the sense that they refer to realities that change over time, but not absolutely relative or arbitrary in a philosophical sense**

David MacKenzie & Chris Chamberlain – *see Homelessness Definitions: An international Review*

Reference: Mackenzie, D. *Homelessness: Definitions – An International Review*. In Smith, S. et.al (2012). International Encyclopedia of Housing and Home, Elsevier.

Table 2: Australian cultural definition of homelessness: A revised model of homelessness based on shared community cultural standards embodied in housing practices.

Categories	Living Situations	Operational definitions
Marginal Housing	Living situations close to the margin of the minimum community cultural standard for housing and living arrangements in Australia	A highly overcrowded household
		Living in improvised dwellings on land the resident owns or is purchasing
		Renting a dwelling not meeting regulations for a habitable dwelling
		Living in a permanently in a caravan park
Tertiary Homelessness	People living in single rooms in private boarding houses - without a bathroom or kitchen and without security of tenure	Living in a boarding/rooming house with shared facilities and no security of tenure
		Permanent/ semi-permanent household (no members employed) renting in a caravan park
Secondary Homelessness	People moving between or living in various forms of temporary shelter including with friends and relatives with no where to live, emergency accommodation, crisis accommodation, hostels boarding houses used as crisis accommodation or caravan parks used as crisis accommodation	Transitional accommodation while waiting for access to affordable housing
		Temporary rent free occupation of house or flat by a person(s) with no other usual address
		Temporary accommodation with friends/relatives/acquaintances – 'couch-surfing'
		Emergency accommodation in hotel/motel or caravan park with a voucher from homeless agency
		Homeless crisis accommodation or night shelter
Primary Homelessness	People without conventional accommodation living on the streets, in squats, railway carriages, in cars, under bridges or in parks	Occupation of temporary Improvised dwelling by a person with no usual address
		Sleeping in a disused building/ railway carriage etc
		Sleeping in a car or van
		Sleeping rough in parks, on the street or under bridges

by David MacKenzie
and Chris Chamberlain

HOW MANY HOMELESS YOUTH?

A major problem for policymakers is how to assess the size of the homeless population. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report, "Our Homeless Children", suggested two estimates of the number of homeless youth on an average night: 20,000 to 25,000 based on informed guess-work and a higher range of 50,000 to 70,000 based on a complex analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics data. This paper attempts to adjudicate between the two estimates, by undertaking a critique of the method by which the higher figure was developed, and then producing an alternative estimate based on a new approach. The 50,000 to 70,000 figure is found to be too high, and a more realistic estimate is in the range of 15,000 to 19,000 per night.

IN AUSTRALIA, it is the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report *Our Homeless Children*, which has set the agenda for public debate about youth homelessness in the 1990s. In the context of a wide-ranging inquiry, the commissioners ordered a specialist enquiry by Dr Rodney Fopp "to examine all available data and prepare an estimate of the numbers of homeless children and young people" (Burdekin 1989, p.5). Fopp concluded that the minimum figure was 50,000 and that there could be as many as 70,000 homeless young people aged 12 to 24 each night (Burdekin 1989, p.365). On the other hand, the commissioners proposed a figure between 20,000 and 25,000 (Burdekin 1989 p.69). These dissonant estimates have created considerable confusion in the community. As Fopp has pointed out:

> ...the press had a great deal of difficulty in coming to grips with

Is it a case of chalk and cheese, apples and oranges?

A response to David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain by Rodney Fopp

Dr Rodney Fopp is a senior lecturer in sociology at the University of South Australia.
Dr Fopp is co-author of the 1992 publication 'Homelessness in Australia—
Causes and Consequences'.

Introduction

This following is a response to the paper by David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain entitled, 'The Number of Homeless Young People in Australia', published in this edition of *National Housing Action*. Their paper is a shortened version of a longer critique published last year in *Youth Studies* (MacKenzie and Chamberlain 1992).

The process adopted in this response is to deal, firstly, with the basic argument in their paper. After a brief outline of several less fundamental but nonetheless important issues, this response moves to an examination of the methodology used by David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain to establish their own estimate.

David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain's stated aim

In two places in their paper, the authors state their aim. In the first instance it is 'to assess the size of the youth homeless population using [their] definition, and to *adjudicate between the estimates of 20,000 to 25,000 and 50,000 to 70,000 contained in the Burdekin Report*'. (emphasis added). The second time the aim to 'adjudicate' occurs is in the

work' and Fopp's 'higher range of 50,000 to 70,000 ... on a complex analysis of Australian Bureau of Statistics data'. David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain have gone to considerable lengths to understand the methodology used to make the estimates for the Burdekin Report.

On the face of it, David MacKenzie and Chris Chamberlain seem to have a point; there does seem to be a discrepancy between the estimates made by Burdekin and Fopp. Moreover the media has used every possible variation of the figures, type of homelessness, and age, to sensationalise the issue and usually to demean and belittle young people and their parents. But who is to blame for the irresponsible coverage of the release of the Burdekin Report? Certainly, the media did not contact me!

Responding to this adjudication

Of central importance to this response are the estimates and the apparent discrepancy between Burdekin and Fopp. To that issue our first question is: do the estimates by Burdekin and Fopp refer to the same social reality? Or: do the two seemingly disparate estimates purport to estimate the same thing? Such questions are based on the premise

National Census of Homeless School Students   2006

1.   Name of School:

[ ]

State: [ ]   Postcode: [ ]

Name of person filling out form:

[ ]

Telephone Number: [ ]

2. Number of students in your School:

Males [ ]

Females [ ]

Total [ ]

3. Is this a rural/remote school with mainly Indigenous students?

YES [ ]   NO [ ]

If YES, include Indigenous young people as homeless if they move around frequently.

4. To the best of your knowledge, how many homeless students are currently attending your school? [*Include those who have found accommodation, but who are in need of continuing support*]

Estimated numbers

Males [ ]

Females [ ]

Total [ ]

• *If you have no homeless students please answer Question 5 and then you are finished. •If you have homeless students go to Q6.*

5. If you have no homeless students during census week, have you had any homeless students in the past 12 months?

YES [ ]   NO [ ]   Don't Know [ ]

6. Indicate where your homeless students are currently staying:

A. *Temporary accommodation or no conventional shelter*

Estimated numbers

Friend's place [ ]

Relative's place [ ]

Moving around frequently [ ]

Government supported accom. [ ]

(eg. crisis refuges, hostels, transitional housing, or SAAP community placement)

Boarding house room [ ]

On the streets/ squat/car/tent etc [ ]

Other [ ]

B. *Longer term arrangement, but homeless within last 3 months and needing continuing support*

Private rental flat/share house [ ]

Boarding with friends/family [ ]

Foster Care [ ]

Back with parents [ ]

Other [ ]

7. **Estimate how many students are in each age group:**

Estimated number in each age group

12 years	[ ]	18yrs	[ ]
13 yrs	[ ]	19yrs	[ ]
14yrs	[ ]	20yrs	[ ]
17yrs	[ ]	20 yrs	[ ]
16yrs	[ ]	21yrs +	[ ]

8. **Homeless students' family situation before leaving home:**

Estimated numbers

Biological parents together [ ]

Single parent only [ ]

Blended family (a parent with a new partner, either married or de-facto) [ ]

Foster parent(s) [ ]

Other situations [ ]

Please specify…………………………………

•*The following questions ask about factors thought to be associated with students becoming homeless.*

9.   How many of the homeless students in your school are Indigenous students?

[ ]

10. How many of the homeless students have spent periods in the state care and protection system [*currently or in the past*]

[ ]

Thank you for your cooperation

Please return the Census forms on Monday August 14th 2006 to Fax (03) 9818 5249

Survey estimates 30,000 students homeless

By ENRICA LONGO
social welfare reporter

Up to 30,000 young people could be homeless while trying to finish secondary school, according to a national survey.

The study in one week in May found that nine out of 1000 secondary students were reported homeless by their schoolteachers.

The study will be released at the Year of the Family Conference in Adelaide today, and shows that Victoria has the greatest number of homeless youth in secondary schools, totalling 3140 between 23 and 27 May.

New South Wales had the next-highest number — 2910, followed by Queensland.

The research, by Dr Chris Chamberlain, a sociologist from Monash University, and Mr David MacKenzie, of the faculty of social sciences at RMIT, found that there were 11,000 homeless secondary students in 1948 schools across Australia in that week.

In their report, The National Census of Homeless School Students, obtained by The Age, they estimated there would be between 25,000 and 30,000 homeless secondary students nationwide a year.

Most schools had more than 10 homeless students and complained that they could not provide adequate support and welfare.

Most homeless students came from one-parent families, or from those where parents were in a de facto marriage or had remarried.

The average number of homeless was 21 a school, but some had up to 70 students without an adequate home.

Dr Chamberlain and Mr MacKenzie said the main problem was that Australia lacked a national strategy on how schools should deal with the problem.

They will today call on the Federal Government and state governments for immediate action to tackle the problem, which they found crossed socio-economic and geographic boundaries.

The high levels of homelessness extended to provincial cities, including Ballarat and Bendigo, not only metropolitan areas.

"Homeless youth have generally been thought of as 'street kids'. The fact that many young people become homeless while still at school has been overlooked," they said.

The key to tackling the problem was early intervention and prevention programs focusing on schools.

The possibility of intervention passed when homeless students dropped out of school because they left behind their social ties.

They then risked being caught up in the homeless subculture, which involved petty crime, prostitution and drug dealing.

Sixty-one per cent of government and Catholic secondary schools reported that they had had homeless students. The rest of the schools surveyed said they occasionally had homeless students.

The homeless study found that:
● Two-thirds were from 17 per cent of all schools.
● Most teenagers were first-time homeless at secondary school.
● Most were between 16 and 17 years old; the youngest was 12.
● 44 per cent were living in temporary accommodation with friends or relatives.
● 30 per cent had recently become homeless.
● Eight per cent had no accommodation.

● One per cent lived in boarding houses (a total of 130 people).
● 17 per cent lived in government-supported accommodation.

Only 1 per cent of schools surveyed did not take part. The researchers visited 100 schools in the middle of the year.

The youth worker at Prahran Secondary College, Mr Mike Loughnan, said the problem was complex and serious because students had to cope with study devoid of any family supports, such as a parent cooking evening meals and taking them to the library. The school has 40 homeless students out of a total school population of 380.

HOMELESS SECONDARY STUDENTS	
In one week, May 1994, there were nearly 11,000 homeless Aust. wide.	
VICTORIA has the highest level of homeless students —	3,140
NSW	2,910
QLD	1,760
SA	1,030
WA	790
TAS	360
ACT	272
NT	170

*Figure adjusted upwards

WHERE THE YOUNG PEOPLE LIVED
44% temporary accomm, mainly with friends and relatives.
30% recently homeless
17% in Gov. supported accomm.
8% no accomm, moved during the census week.
1% boarding houses.
Most of the homeless were aged 16 and 17 years.

Source: The National Census of Homeless School Students

Picture: SIMON O'DWYER

Mike Loughnan, left, a welfare worker, plays parent to homeless students Dora Mills, Kevin Connors and Irene Hue. All three had to move out of home after experiencing difficulties living with their parents.

Homeless students set their sights firmly on a university place

Home-cooked meals and a domestic chauffeur service are not part of the deal for the thousands of Australian secondary students who are homeless.

Dora Mills, Kevin Connors and Irene Hue, all 18, have been homeless throughout their VCE. All three have got through and are hoping for a place in university.

Ms Mills, a student at Princes Hill Secondary College, shared a flat with friends in Elwood and St Kilda after leaving home because she could not get along with her parents. She survived through most of her secondary education with Government student support.

She dropped out of school soon after becoming homeless but went back when she was again motivated.

The biggest problem she faced as a secondary student without a family home was that she had "very little family support". "I had to deal with everything myself. I didn't have people to cook for me, pay my rent . . . and it's harder to concentrate on studies."

She is hoping to get into an arts degree course at Melbourne University.

Kevin Connors, who has completed the VCE at the Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE, is also hoping to get into an arts degree course. He wants to major in history and archaeology.

'I miss my dad and I do feel I've missed out on all the love and stuff like that'
— Irene, 18

He has been homeless since the beginning of the year because his father left Victoria for Queensland. Before then, he periodically lived on the streets.

"I got my own flat for a while but that all blew up because I didn't have enough money. I lived with Hanover Youth Welfare Services in a flat with a friend," he said. "I would be better off if I had my family around."

Irene Hue, a student at Prahran Secondary College last year, has lived in a flat not far from her father and his new family's home for two years.

She considers herself luckier than many homeless secondary students because she can go to her father's house even though she has found it difficult to get along with her new family.

She has lived on her own since she was 16. "I miss my dad and I do feel I've missed out on all the love and stuff like that."
— Enrica Longo

The Age
22nd November 1994

Homeless study shows need for school welfare

By ADELE HORIN

Up to 140 students in any typical city high school of 1,000 students are at risk of becoming homeless and up to 60 of them are at serious risk, according to a major study to be released today.
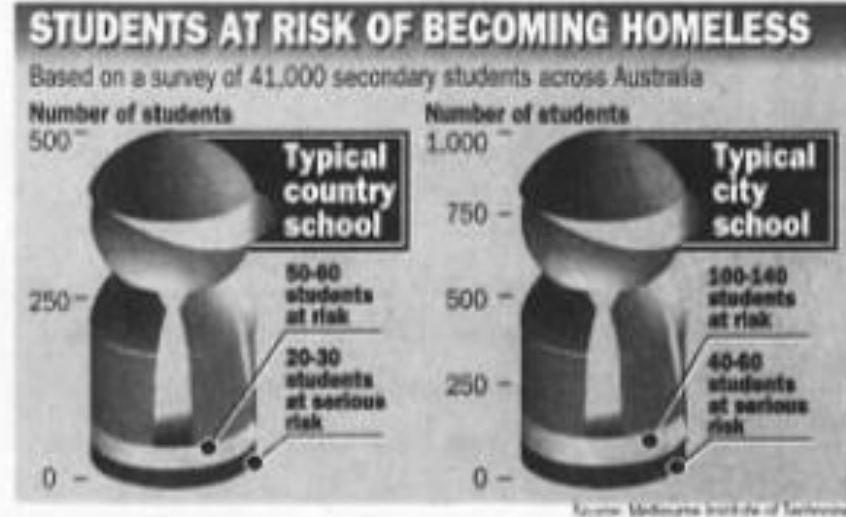
The 40 to 60 students considered at serious risk of becoming homeless would be experiencing family problems. Many of them would feel unsafe, some would have run away at least once, and most would be unhappy at home.

The study of 41,000 secondary students from 63 Australian schools reveals a higher than expected group experiencing serious family difficulties.

It shows the need for all schools to have effective welfare or pastoral care services, according to the authors, Dr Chris Chamberlain, of Monash University, and Mr David MacKenzie, of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

In the Budget, the Federal Government abolished the $7 million-a-year Students at Risk program, which provided early intervention for students with family trouble.

The study, to be released at the First National Conference on Homelessness in Melbourne, also shows that in a typical country high school of 500 students, 50 to 60 students are potentially at risk of homelessness, including 20 to 30 in serious trouble at home.

The study shows that 60 per cent of the at-risk students are girls, contrary to teachers' views that boys are more in danger.

It shows that the biggest group of students — 45 per cent — is happy at home and appear in no danger of leaving or being thrown out. But a minority are at serious risk.

The students, from years seven to 12, filled out questionnaires designed to detect their vulnerability to homelessness. They were asked whether they had run away from home in the past 12 months, felt safe at home, would like to move out of home soon, felt happy at home, or got into a lot of conflict with their parents. Of the seriously at risk group, 90 per cent did not feel safe at home, 58 per cent had run away, 89 per cent reported a lot of conflict with parents, and 94 per cent felt either unhappy or ambivalent about home.

In each of the nine communities surveyed, some schools had higher or lower than the average numbers of at-risk students. But in about 80 per cent of the schools between 10 and 14 per cent of the students were potentially at risk of homelessness.

Students in middle-class suburbs were only slightly less at risk than students in working-class areas.

STUDENTS AT RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS

Based on a survey of 41,000 secondary students across Australia

Number of students — Typical country school
500
250
0
50-60 students at risk
20-30 students at serious risk

Number of students — Typical city school
1,000
750
500
250
0
100-140 students at risk
40-60 students at serious risk

Source: Melbourne Institute of Technology

Sydney Morning Herald
5th September 1996

Homeless children on streets younger

By JULIE LEWIS
Education Writer

Homeless children in NSW are dropping out of high school younger than in other States, many to live on the streets, a new study suggests.

School support services for homeless students in NSW are "probably the least adequate in the country", Melbourne-based researchers Mr David MacKenzie and Dr Chris Chamberlain claim in the first national census of homeless school students.

If they remain at school, the slide into a street subculture may often be averted and a return to the family is more likely, say to the researchers.

There are 2,910 homeless students in NSW high schools, according to the census figures.

While Sydney schools have 1,200 homeless students, there are also 100 in Wollongong, 200 on the Central Coast, about 120 in Newcastle and between 20 and 30 in country towns such as Wagga Wagga, Moree and Murwillumbah.

"If we don't do something about early intervention the problem is going to get worse and worse," Mr MacKenzie said.

The study, conducted in the final school week of May 1994, identified 10,440 homeless schoolchildren in the country. Not all students who are homeless are on the streets. They may be moving around between friends or living in refuges and temporary accommodation.

The researchers present their NSW findings for the first time today at a conference held by the Council of Social Service of NSW, titled *The Home/School Divide: Where Welfare and Education Meet*, at the University of Sydney.

The census of 1,948 high schools Australia-wide found that the level of homelessness among students in NSW schools was lower than the national average. Seven in 1,000 students in NSW schools were homeless compared with a national average of nine in every 1,000.

However, this was cause for concern not congratulation, Mr MacKenzie said. The researchers concluded that the lower level was due to homeless students in NSW schools dropping out sooner than in other States.

The numbers of students on benefits such as Austudy for homeless students and the homeless youth allowance in NSW also suggested the number of homeless youth overall was higher than the numbers in schools.

"When you look at statistics for benefits they don't give any indication that homelessness in NSW is lower than other States," he said.

He called for a school counsellor to be appointed to every school rather than one counsellor responsible for several schools, as at present.

A spokeswoman for the Minister for Education, Mrs Chadwick, strongly questioned the study's findings.

Stressing that the minister had not seen the study, she said: "If they are saying we have one of the lowest levels of homelessness in our student population then that is good news."

The argument that this meant homeless students in NSW were leaving school earlier than in other States "did not make sense", she said.

The State Government had recently appointed an extra 200 counsellors and the ratio of students to counsellors, now one to 1,000, was the lowest in history of public education in NSW.

Sydney Morning Herald
17th February 1996

Counting the homeless
2006

Victoria

'a policy dark age'
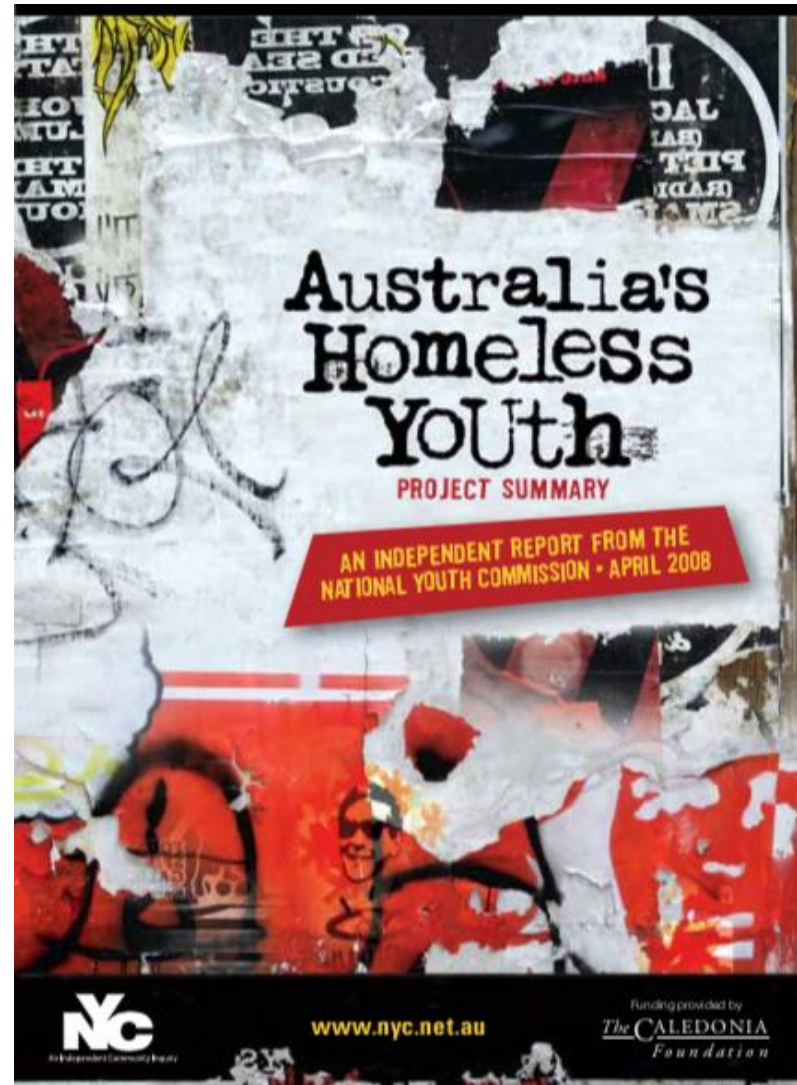
National Youth Commission into Youth Homelessness [NYC]

2007-2008

Launched first week of April 2008

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This Project Summary represents a snapshot of the Australia's Homeless Youth Project 2008, a collaboration between:

The National Youth Commission (NYC), the first national independent inquiry into youth homelessness since the Burdekin Inquiry in 1989. The National Youth Commission comprised of Major David Eldridge, Associate Professor David MacKenzie, Ms Narelle Clay AM and Father Wally Dethlefs. In 2007, the NYC held 21 days of hearings across all States and Territories. Altogether, 319 people gave formal evidence and 91 written submissions were received from community organisations, individuals and government departments. The NYC's findings, including over 80 recommendations, are published in a major report, *Australia's Homeless Youth* © National Youth Commission, 2008, downloadable from **www.nyc.net.au**

The Oasis, a major feature documentary, made by Shark Island Productions, in collaboration with ABC Television. Homeless young people participated in the film for over two years, courageously sharing their life experiences. **www.theoasismovie.com.au**

The Caledonia Foundation is a private philanthropic foundation with a focus on sustainable futures for young Australians, which funded the NYC, the education and outreach component of *The Oasis*, and the development of this report. **www.caledoniafoundation.com.au**

The National Youth Commission's *Australia's Homeless Youth* Report, and the feature documentary The Oasis were both launched during National Youth Week in April 2008.

Image from the documentary *THE OASIS*

AUSTRALIA IS FACING A CRISIS IN YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

- Every night 22,000 teenagers are homeless - twice the number there was 20 years ago.

- One in two homeless youths are turned away from emergency accommodation every night because services are full.

- This is totally unacceptable in a country as prosperous as Australia.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW.
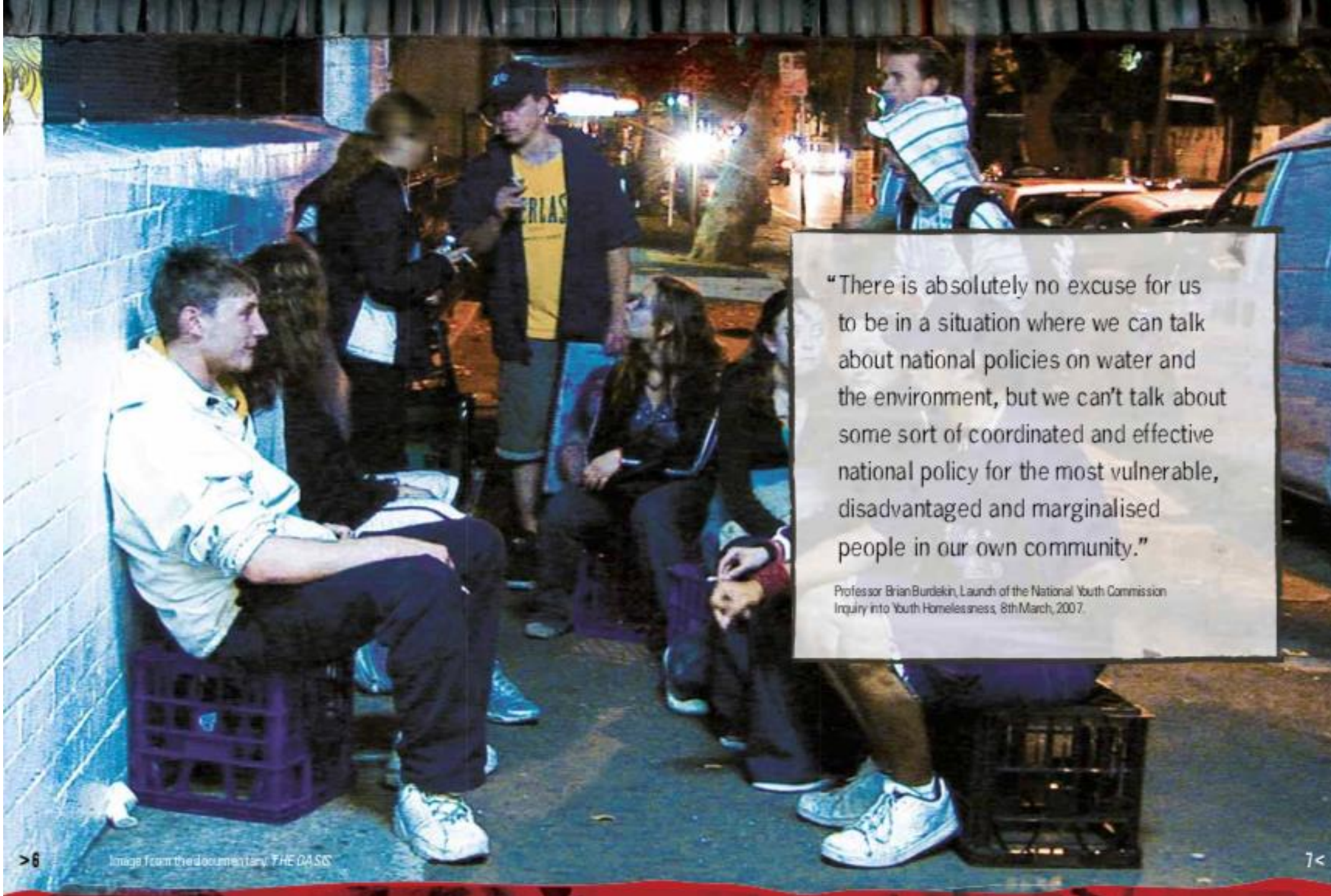
"There is absolutely no excuse for us to be in a situation where we can talk about national policies on water and the environment, but we can't talk about some sort of coordinated and effective national policy for the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalised people in our own community."
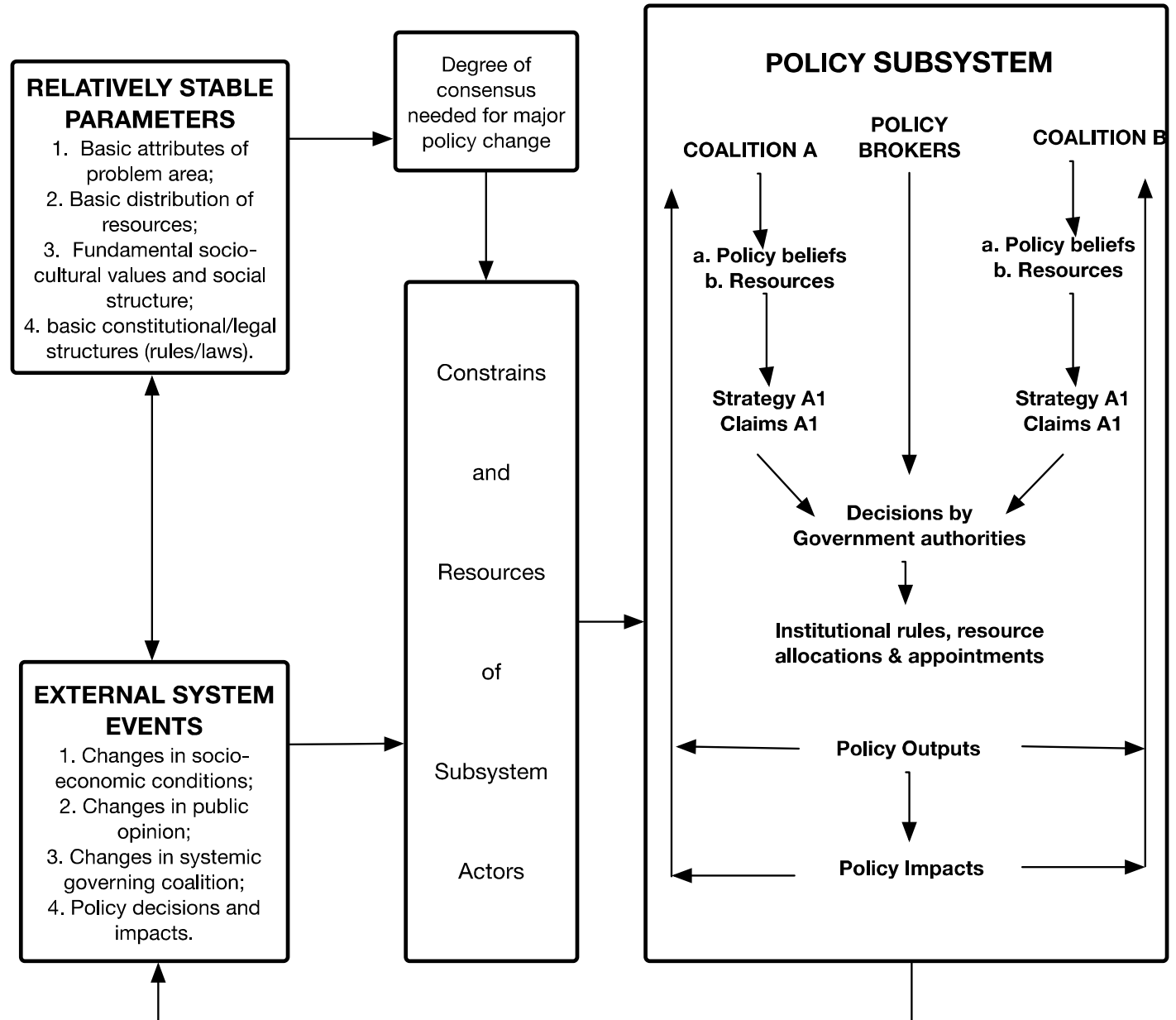
Professor Brian Burdekin, Launch of the National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Homelessness, 8th March, 2007.

Image from the documentary THE OASIS

"It is a national disgrace that there are twice as many homeless young Australians now than in 1989 when the Human Rights Commission undertook its landmark inquiry. We need to set a national aspirational goal to address this situation. No young person should be homeless in a country as economically prosperous as Australia. Part of the economic surpluses from our prosperity needs to be used to eliminate homelessness. This is an achievable national goal."

Associate Professor David MacKenzie, NYC Commissioner 2008.

Theory of Change: Policy Formation

RELATIVELY STABLE PARAMETERS
1. Basic attributes of problem area;
2. Basic distribution of resources;
3. Fundamental socio-cultural values and social structure;
4. basic constitutional/legal structures (rules/laws).

Degree of consensus needed for major policy change

Constrains

and

Resources

of

Subsystem

Actors

EXTERNAL SYSTEM EVENTS
1. Changes in socio-economic conditions;
2. Changes in public opinion;
3. Changes in systemic governing coalition;
4. Policy decisions and impacts.

POLICY SUBSYSTEM

COALITION A

POLICY BROKERS

COALITION B

a. **Policy beliefs**
b. **Resources**

a. **Policy beliefs**
b. **Resources**

**Strategy A1
Claims A1**

**Strategy A1
Claims A1**

Decisions by Government authorities

Institutional rules, resource allocations & appointments

Policy Outputs

Policy Impacts

1973-1980: reports of Young people becoming homeless

1980: Senate Inquiry into youth homelessness

1985: National Homelessness Program SAAP

1989-1990: HEROC 'The Burdekin Report'

1994: Census of homeless school students

1995: House of Reps "The Morris Report"

1997-2003: Reconnect Program

2007–2008: National Youth Commission (NYC) into Youth Homelessness

2010: The Geelong Project (TGP) begins

2018: TGP funded - $2.8m over 2 years

2018: NSW funding - $4.7m over 4 years

2018: COSS Model scale-up beginning!

2018: Upstream Project Australia

Foundations of the COSS Model

COLLABORATION

'community of schools and services'

COSS Model

EARLY IDENTIFICATION

'Population Screening'

AIAD – Australian Index of Adolescent Development

LONGITUDINAL OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT

- Reduced family conflicts & homelessness;
- Less early school leaving

PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

- Multi-tiered;
- Flexible;
- Dynamic over time;

'Collective Impact

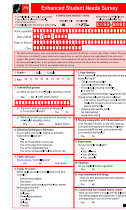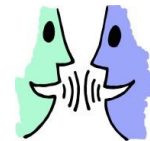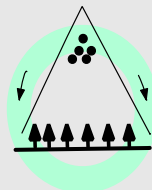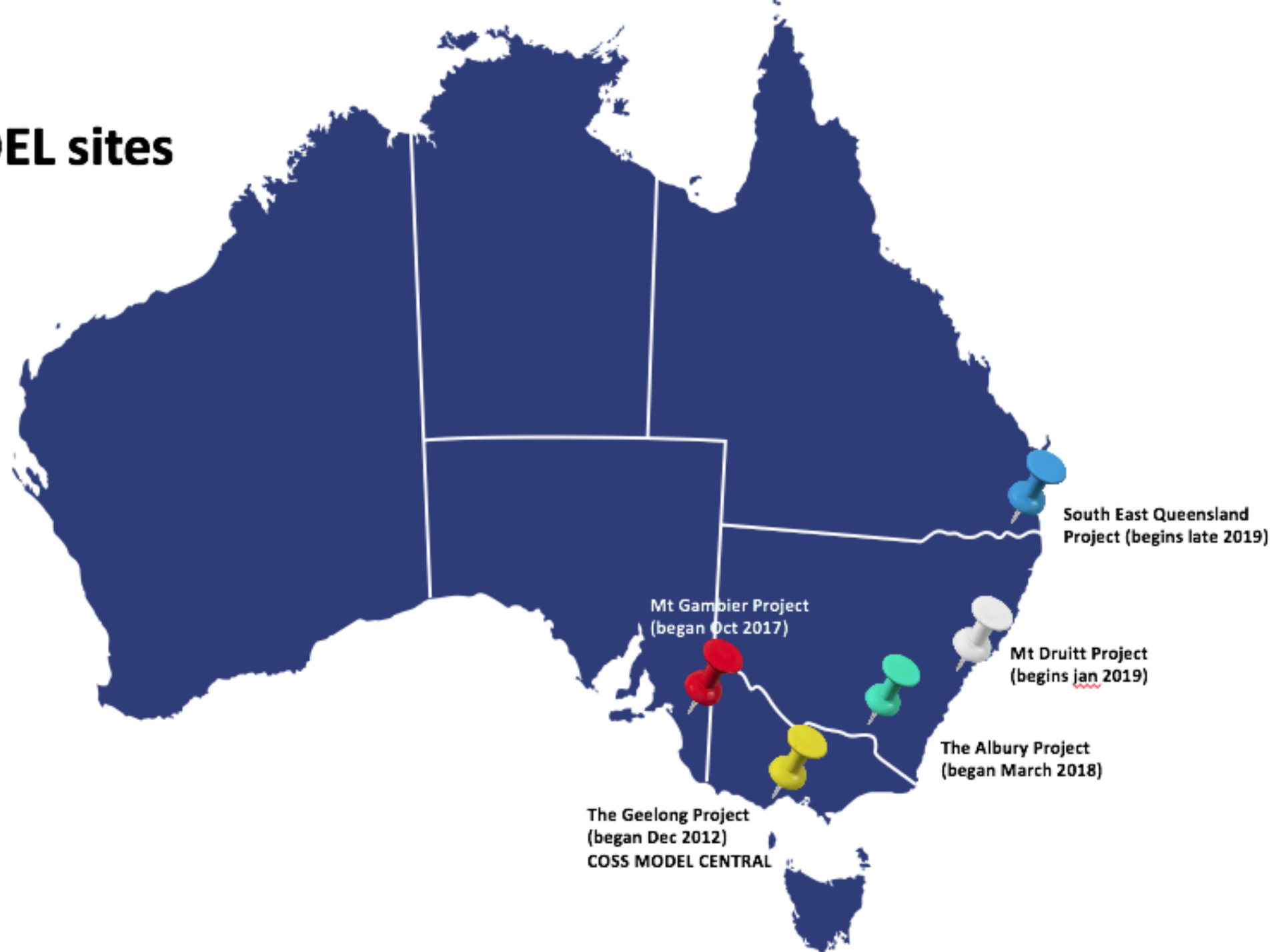|		
Common Agenda		All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to its solution through agreed upon actions.
Shared Measurement		Data collection and measurement of outcomes consistently across all participants to ensure efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.
Mutually Reinforcing Activities		The activities of participants may be different while still being tightly coordinated through a mutually agreed common plan of action.
Continuous Communication		Consistent and open communication amongst participants to build trust, assure mutual objectives and build common motivation.
Backbone Support		A skilled staff and organisational form to build and manage the entire collective impact initiative by coordinating the participant organisations and activities.

Australia:
COSS MODEL sites

South East Queensland
Project (begins late 2019)

Mt Gambier Project
(began Oct 2017)

Mt Druitt Project
(begins jan 2019)

The Albury Project
(began March 2018)

The Geelong Project
(began Dec 2012)
COSS MODEL CENTRAL

The future requires system reform

Place-based Collective Impact!

This is the Upstream Project!