

Home Takeovers

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Conference

Winnipeg, MB

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What is a “Home Takeover?”

- A situation in which a legitimate tenant finds themselves unsafe, physically, financially or psychologically, because of the presence of people in their home that they may or may not be able to remove
- We see it happening in a variety of ways

Quick Stats from Ottawa

- Research in 2013: *“Home Takeovers of Vulnerable Tenants: Perspectives from Ottawa”*
- It happens more than we think
- High and low-rise apartment buildings
- Primarily single tenants with a number of vulnerabilities (i.e., older adults, drug addictions, mental health issues, developmental disabilities, isolation)
- Resolutions involve a series of interventions and support from a number of service providers

The Home Takeovers Committee

- Partnerships
 - Action Logement; Aging in Place; Canadian Mental Health Association; Connecting on Disability and Abuse; Crime Prevention Ottawa; Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre; Nepean, Rideau & Osgoode Community Resource Centre (Elder Abuse Response and Referral Service); Elder Abuse Ontario; Options Bytown Non-Profit Housing; Ottawa Community Housing; Ottawa Police Services; Ottawa Public Health; Ottawa-Carleton Association for Persons with Developmental Disabilities; Rooming House Services (City of Ottawa); Salus Ottawa; The Ottawa Mission; Youth Services Bureau
- The changing role of the committee

Successes

- “Home Takeovers”
- Partnerships
- Getting the word out



Home Takeovers Tools

➤ Cards and Posters



➤ Guidebook



➤ Videos

Challenges

- Reaching the most vulnerable
- Private landlords, co-ops and condo boards
- Reporting
- Keeping statistics
 - Are we reducing home takeovers?

How it Happens

- A friend is looking for a temporary place to sleep
- Offering “free” drugs or other goods/services
- Companionship
- Protection
- Family members looking for support from parents, grandparents, siblings, etc.

Prevention

- Positive relationships
- Key questions
- Prior knowledge of home takeovers
- Reducing isolation

Questions

1. What are some of the things that you might notice to alert you to the problem?
2. What are some of the things you might consider doing to intervene in this situation?
3. After the takeover is resolved, what are some ways that:
 - a) You can support the victim following the resolution?
 - b) Prevent a future takeover from occurring?

Identifying a Takeover

- Look out for:
 - Changed behaviour
 - Is the person more withdrawn? Not showing up where you normally see them? Expressing that they're always out of money or food? Showing signs of weakness, weight loss, stress or abuse? Have they told you they have a house guest?
 - Increased activity around the unit
 - Increased traffic, especially at odd hours
 - People you don't recognize around the unit/building, or the same guest coming and going from the unit
 - More noise coming from the unit

What can you do?

- Work with the resident to implement a plan of action
- Making the environment uncomfortable for the perpetrator
 - More frequent, un-scheduled check-ins
 - Door knocks and flyer drops
- Check in with other service providers who may be involved with the client
- Report to police

After Care and Prevention

- Frequent check-ins
- What kind of supports are needed to re-establish a positive environment?
- Establishing connections with the community
- Safety planning

Thank you!
Questions?

All 8 videos are available at:

[https://www.youtube.com/user/
CrimePOttawaVideos](https://www.youtube.com/user/CrimePOttawaVideos)

To order materials, contact:
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