

Impacts of COVID-19 on 2SLGBTQ+ Youth At-Risk Of, And Experiencing, Homelessness

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Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
Centre de toxicomanie et de santé mentale



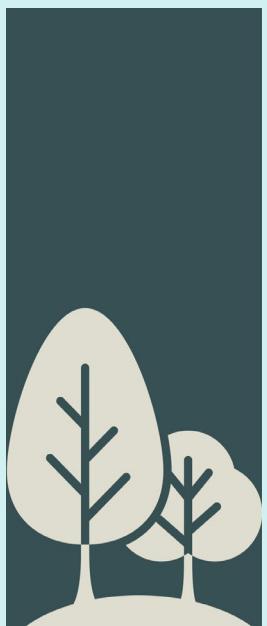
MAKING
THE SHIFT^{INC}

2SLGBTQ+ Youth Homelessness in Canada






- ADDITIONAL FACTORS:**
- Exiting public systems
 - Racism
 - Unstable employment
 - Poverty

**Indigenous LGBTQ youth
and LGBTQ youth of colour
experience homelessness
at disproportionate rates**



**THIS IS NOT A
“BIG CITY PROBLEM”**
LGBTQ2S youth and young adults
exist everywhere.



- CHALLENGES & BARRIERS:**
-  Forced to choose between unsafe situations, due to homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia.
 -  Transgender women of colour face the highest rates of discrimination and violence.
 -  Increased risk of depression, anxiety, suicidality, PTSD, and substance misuse.



**DATA COLLECTION TOOLS,
SURVEYS & INTAKE FORMS
OFTEN DO NOT INCLUDE
LGBTQ2S IDENTITIES.**

Study Participants: 2SLGBTQ+ Youth Experiencing Homelessness



WHO PARTICIPATED?

**92 YOUTH
AGED 15-28**
(AVERAGE AGE: 20 YEARS)

57% identified as transgender or gender diverse

43% identified as cisgender

43% identified as bisexual or pansexual

33% identified as gay or lesbian

46% unemployed before pandemic vs. **72%** unemployed since pandemic

Race/Ethnicity	Participants
Asian	11
Black	16
European	17
Indigenous	<5
Latinx	<5
Mixed Background	14
White	47

Region	Participants
Toronto	39
Peel	14
York Region	8
London	7
Hamilton	5
Durham	5
Other (e.g., Barrie, Orillia, Waterloo)	12

“ The whole reason I became homeless was because I came out. ”

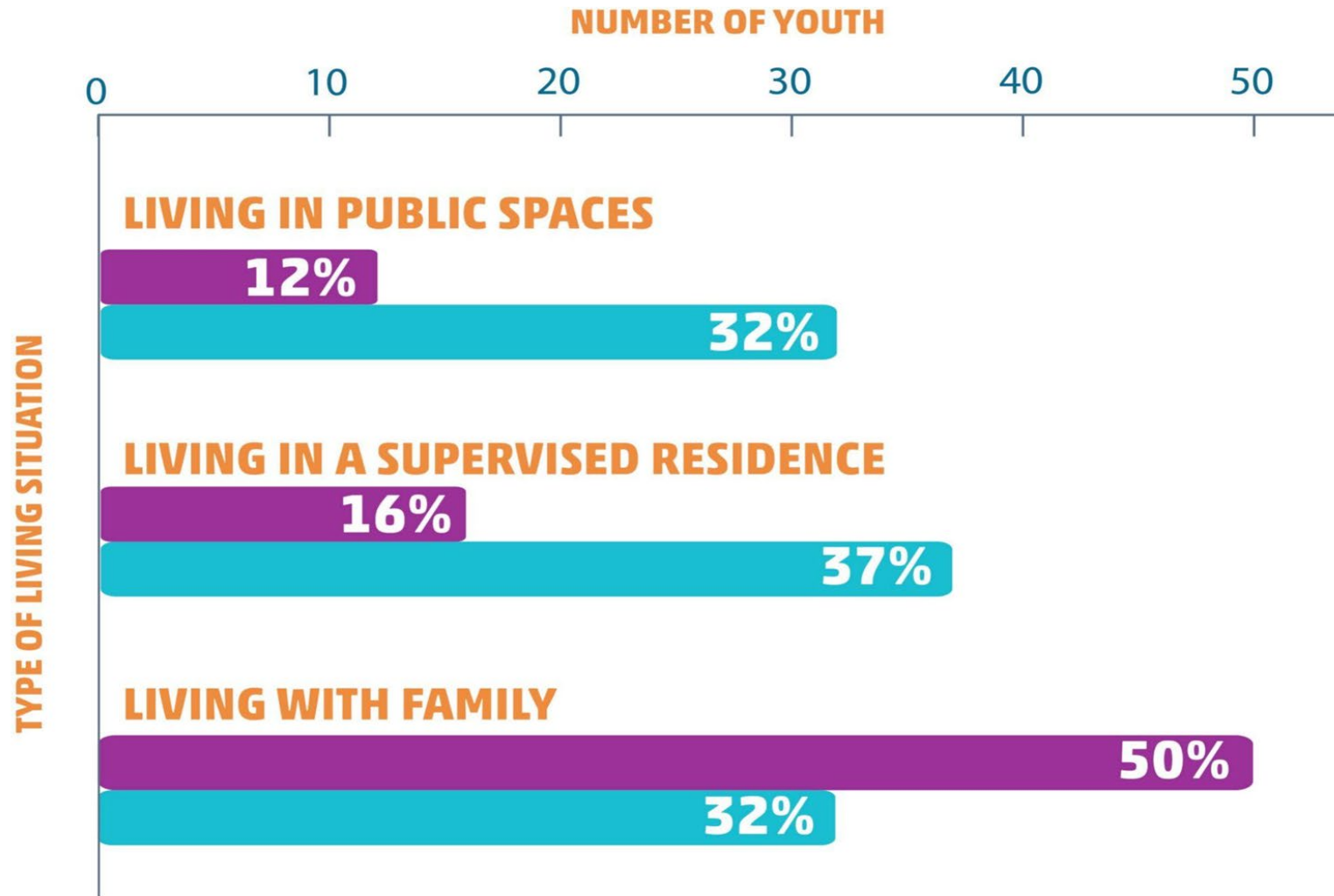
Stevie, 16-years-old



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Living Situation



“ You're isolating 24/7 with your emotional and psychological and religious abusers. That has been pretty awful to say the least. ”

CeCe, 26-years-old



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Mental Health



YOUTH REPORTED SEVERE ANXIETY



YOUTH REPORTED MODERATELY SEVERE OR SEVERE DEPRESSION



YOUTH REPORTED NON-SUICIDAL SELF-INJURY



YOUTH ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

MENTAL HEALTH CARE



7 OUT OF 10 YOUTH

experienced changes to their mental health care (e.g., delays to appointments or getting prescriptions, appointments being moved online) since the COVID-19 pandemic



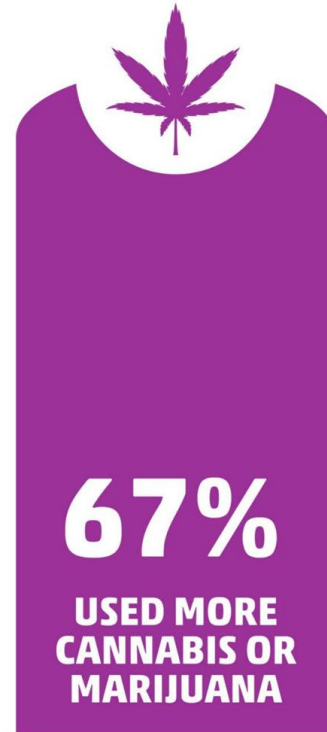
8 OUT OF 10 YOUTH

could not get the mental health care they needed since the COVID-19 pandemic

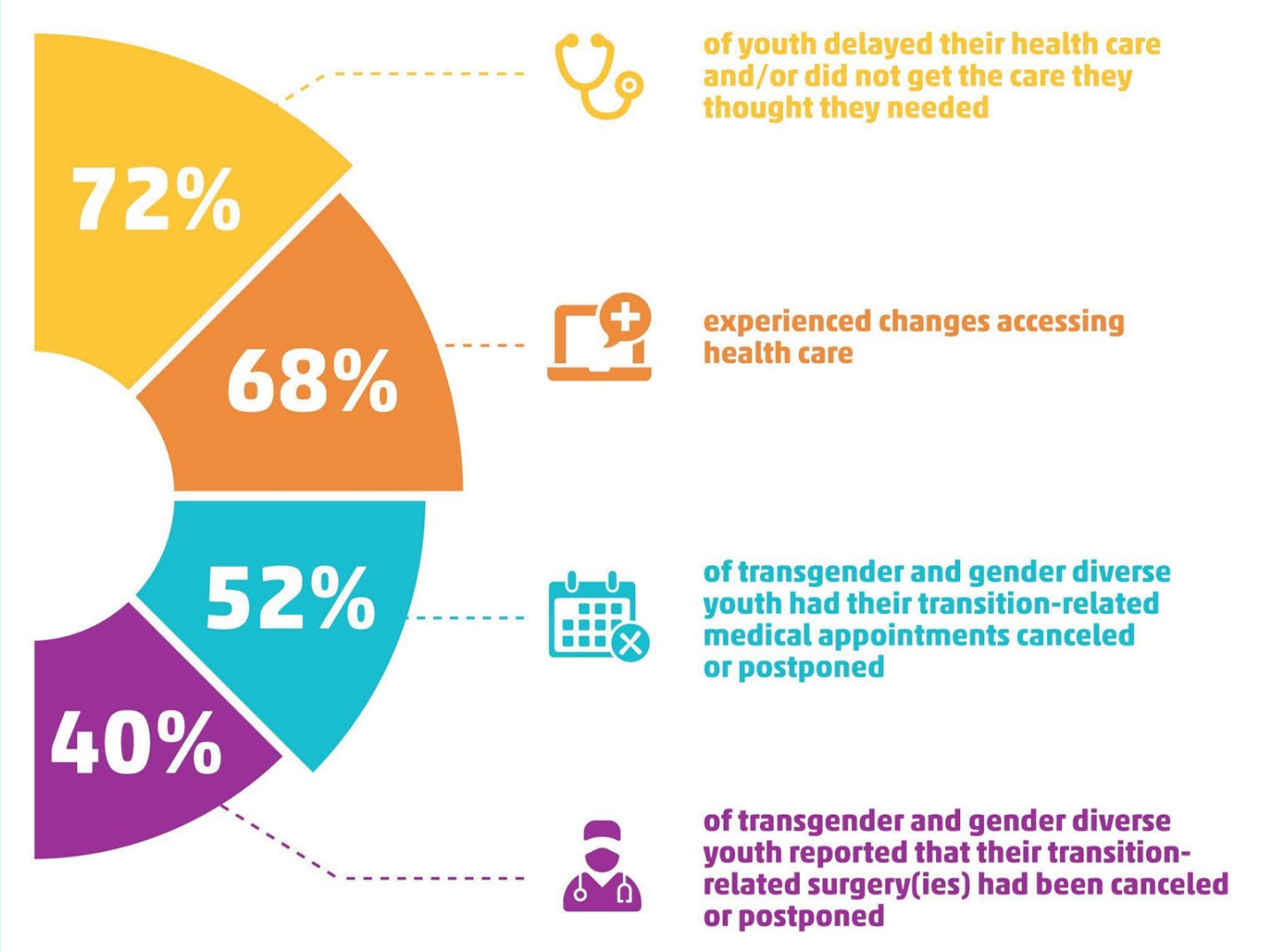
Alcohol & Substance Use



Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic more than half of youth scored in the problematic alcohol and substance use range



Health Care Access



“Those immediate supports that you could have access to prior to COVID-19, because there were so many, are now almost obsolete.”

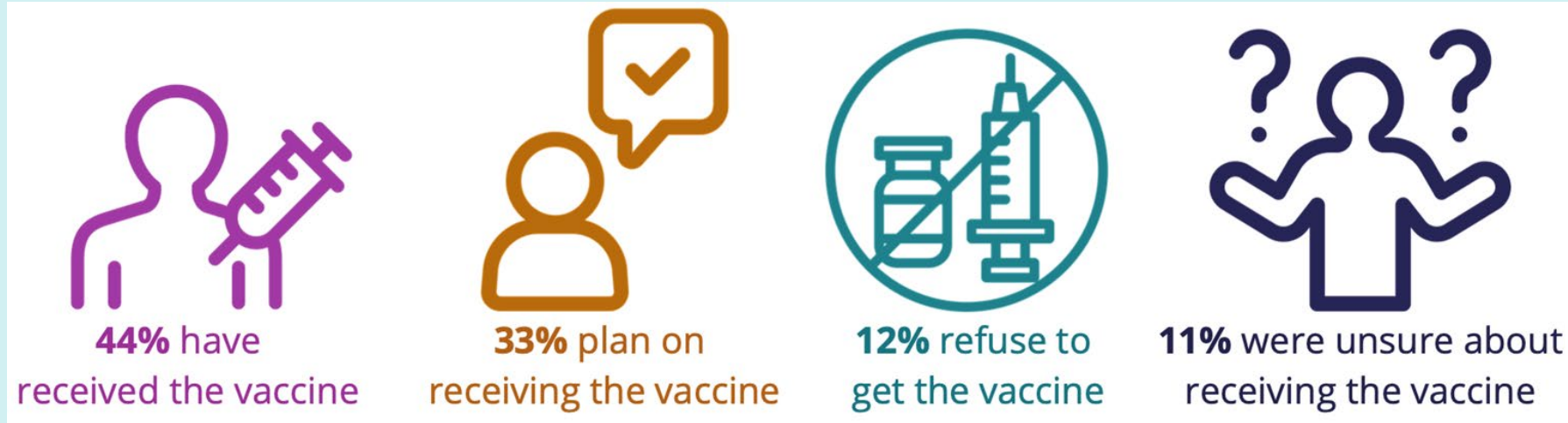
Key Informant, Youth Shelter



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COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake & Attitudes



Factors Associated with Vaccine Non-Confidence and Refusal



Accelerated vaccine development



Potential side effects



Medical mistrust and past discrimination



Fear of needles



Lack of transport and accessible vaccination clinics

“ There is a history of the medical field and how they treat Black women and how they treat minorities in general [...] I just don't trust Western medicine because it wasn't built for me and it's not here to help me. ”

Gabby, 17-years-old



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COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic for 2SLGBTQ+ people

The CAMH Vaccine Clinic is pleased to offer a special one-day **drop-in clinic** for 2SLGBTQ+ people and supportive loved ones.

All eligible groups can receive the vaccine with or without a health card, regardless of their immigration status.

When

March 31st, 2022 | 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Where

100 Stokes Street, Toronto, Ontario
Sandi & Jim Treliving Gym in the
Bell Gateway Building

What vaccines will be available?

Both Pfizer and Moderna vaccines
will be available.



Public Health Messaging

Youth reported that public health messaging and guidelines were irrelevant and not always feasible for them to follow:

“Stay at home”

Those experiencing homelessness typically do not have a stable, secure, or safe home to stay at.

“My mask keeps my parents safe”

Identity-based family conflict is the leading cause of homelessness for 2SLGBTQ+ youth. Incentivization of parent safety may not be effective for this demographic.

Mandatory mask guidelines

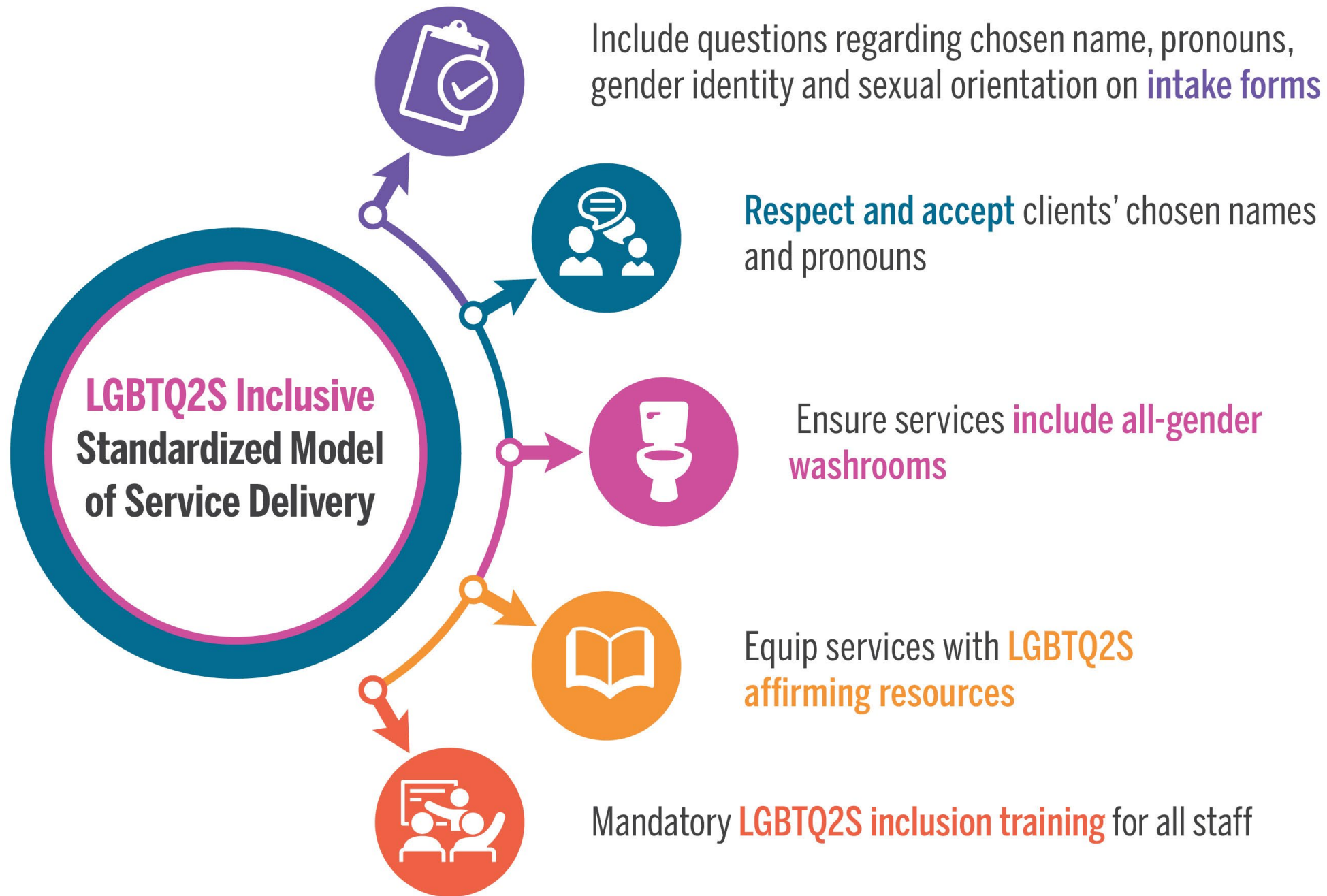
Affordability is a barrier to accessing masks.

Social distancing

Congregate living conditions make social distancing difficult to follow.

Recommendations: Inclusive & Targeted Public Health Messaging

- Public health messaging geared towards 2SLGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness
- Ensure public health guidelines are feasible for unhoused youth to follow
 - *more graphics*
 - *simplified messaging*
 - *avoiding jargon*
- Deliver public health messaging through trusted and familiar sources
- Offer space for two-way dialogue inviting youth to engage in discussion about questions and concerns regarding public health guidelines and safety during the pandemic



Thank you!

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