



Surfacing Our Strengths: Developing Prototypes to Address Health, Well-Being, and Housing Challenges for Women+

Presented at the CAEH 2022 conference,
Toronto, ON

November 03, 2022



greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness
hope has found a home



**Every six days a woman in Canada is
killed by her intimate partner***

*<https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/ending-homelessness-women-and-children-affected-intimate-partner-violence%C2%A0>

- 
- **Violence** plays a **pivotal role** in experiences of **homelessness** for **women**, especially for **Indigenous women** due to ongoing **impacts of colonialism**.
 - The **homelessness-serving sector** and **violence against women (VAW) sector** currently **operate quite separately**, presenting challenges to providing responsive, person-centred and culturally appropriate supports and housing options.
 - **As a result**, many **women+** are “**poorly served** by both, or not served by either – especially Indigenous women and others with multiple marginalizations” (Maki, 2017).

Background



Surfacing Our Strengths: Background

The Surfacing Our Strengths (SoS) Solutions Lab focused on **honouring** and **centering** the **voices of Women+** with **living/lived experiences** of **homelessness** and **violence** in order to listen, learn, co-develop, and implement new **solutions** that address interconnected health, well-being, and housing challenges for this population.



Who are Women+?

All women, including people with diverse gender identities

Definition developed for the Surfacing Our Strengths NHS Solutions Lab.



The Challenge

- 👉 How might we co-develop equitable, safe and culturally supportive responses to the housing needs of women+ who have been/are at risk of experiencing violence and homelessness in Greater Victoria?
- 👉 How might we co-develop solutions in a way that protects the dignity and cultural identity of women+?



Co-developing equitable, safe and culturally supportive responses to the housing needs of Women+

- Today we will share the process used to co-develop prototypes for equitable, safe and culturally supportive responses to the housing needs of Women+ during the 18-month SoS Solutions Lab
- Developed through a collaboration with Women+ who have been/are at risk of experiencing violence and homelessness, Peer Researchers, front line workers in the sector, multiple levels of government, and community partners

The Lab Backbone & Leadership Teams



greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness
hope has found a home



Funded by



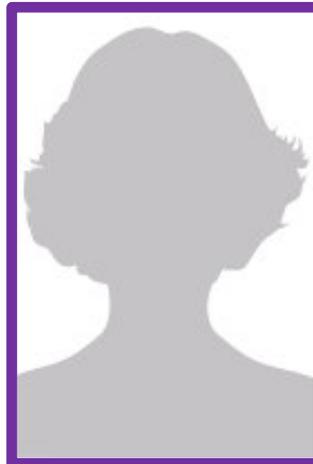
Peer Researcher Team



Melissa Barnhard



Hilary Marks

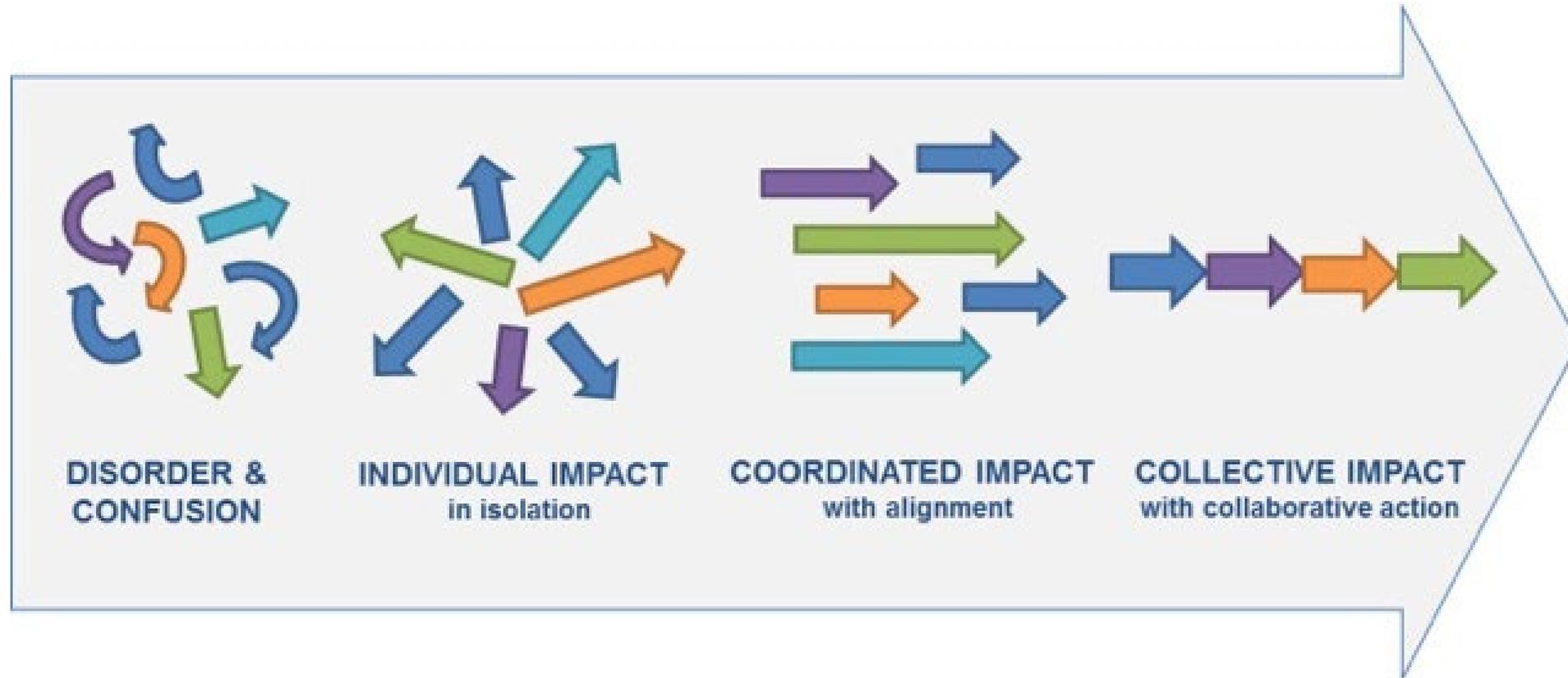


Malinda



Mandy (Amanda) MacKearney

Collective Impact



SOS Solutions Lab Phases

Phase 1 DEFINITION



1. **Establish the Scope:** Frame the Lab Challenge and what we are seeking to learn from through the Lab.
2. **Engage the Community:** Engagement to provide guidance and direction.
3. **Setup Agreements, Protocols, Roles & Structures:** Set up overall Lab Design.

Phase 2 DISCOVERY



1. **Generate Insight:** About the issues through data and lived experience.
2. **Current State:** Understand the current state of the issue based on a range of participatory research methodologies.

Phase 3 DEVELOPMENT



1. **Peer Research Team Meetings:** Regular meetings with Peer Researchers.
2. **Leadership Team Meeting:** Explore personas, journey maps, and identify leverage points.
3. **Analysis of Key Tensions & Opportunities:** Produced four personas and 'iceberg' analysis of key patterns, structures, and mindsets.
4. **Workshop Part 1. Pressure Points & Leverage Points:** Engaged cross-system actors and people with lived experience to explore and prioritize leverage.
5. **Workshop Part 2. Ideas to Action:** Used design thinking to generate potential ideas for prototypes.

Phase 4 TEST & PROTOTYPE



1. **Define the Prototype Challenge:** Identify the specific challenge you are developing a prototype to address.
2. **Create a Learning Plan:** Develop a guiding question(s)—e.g., “how might we...”—to get clear on what we want to learn and a learning plan.
3. **Build It:** Build the prototype (make it real and tangible)
4. **Create a Testing Plan:** Create a testing plan to answer – How will you test the prototype? With whom? When?
5. **Test It:** Test the prototype and receive feedback from potential users and stakeholders
6. **Refine It and Adapt:** Use the feedback to refine, evolve and test again.
7. **Reflect and Assess:** Summarize prototype results, recommended next stage and why.

Phase 5 ROADMAP



What is the roadmap phase?

Co-create a **Solution Uptake Roadmap** for the most promising solutions, and develop implementation Plans for moving forward.

SOS Solutions Lab Prototypes

System Operations & Safety Peer Navigators (SoS-PN)

How might this work?



On Mondays, Penny begins her day at the Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness.



There, she meets Helen, whom she has been working with. Helen has a brain injury and has trouble managing their appointments to get into housing. Penny introduces Helen to The Cridge Brain Injury Services to help memory strategies.



In the afternoon, Penny does outreach in the community. Today, she is checking in on a peer that has been staying at the Sandy Merriman Transition House.



Penny meets with Layla there. She's settling in well and she feels ready to talk to someone about her experiences. Penny connects her to the Indigenous Womens Counselling Services.



On Tuesday mornings, Penny sits in at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria. Today, she meets Naya, who uses ICA's translations services to communicate her needs, such as finding a transition house, to Penny.



After her meeting, Penny gets a call from Corrie, a peer who is in crisis after an encounter with her stalker.



Penny picks Corrie up and takes her to PEERS. She leaves Corrie with her card so that she can call her later if she needs help navigating the shelter system.

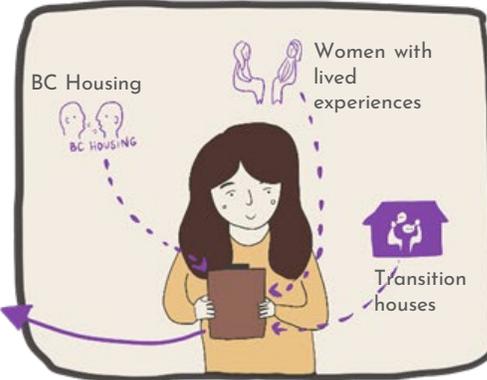


Before the work day ends, Penny goes back to the organization she started at to debrief and decompress with a colleague. They go for a walk to chat about personal and work related issues that have come up in the day.

Data Collection for Women+ at Risk of Violence and Homelessness

How could it work?

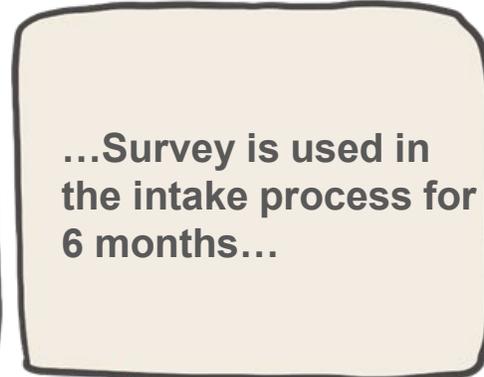
Example of questions on the previous page



Create survey questions together with important stakeholders.



Helen is introduced to the CAA intake process, and is asked to answer the new survey.



Please note that this prototype is still under development and the team is still waiting to consult BC housing, BC Transition Housing, CAA, etc.



An analyst takes the data and analyses it for trends to create a report.



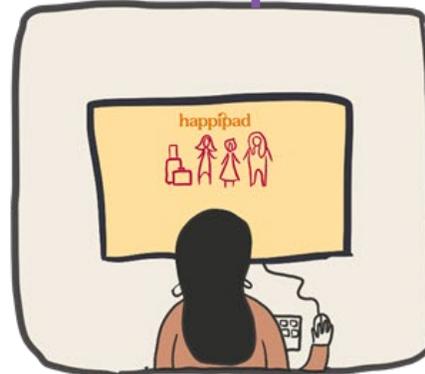
The research is then presented to the CAA Advisory Committee.



The CAA team is then able to use the data to clearly illustrate the need for women's housing to decision makers.

Housing Supply Through Shared Accommodation

What does the process look like?



Sonya is referred to **Happipad** by her support worker as she transitions out of 3rd stage housing. She is greeted by a landing page mentioning a partnership between Happipad and women support organizations to provide housing for women fleeing violence.



Sonya fills out a questionnaire that has been tailored to fit the needs of women who are fleeing abuse, and notes her needs and preferences.



Sally, a senior who wants to rent out a room in her home, already plans to put a listing on **Happipad**. On their website, she sees a notice about a new **Happipad** initiative which seeks to offer housing options to women leaving transitional housing.



Sally fills out her profile and indicates that she's open to renting her room to a woman leaving transitional housing. She's looking for a quiet roommate who might enjoy having dinner together sometimes and can help with gardening.



Sonya sees the listing, with Sally's profile and preferences, and feels like it would be a perfect fit. She sends an application to Sally, and Sally also feels like the match is right.



Happipad gathers banking information, and creates a contract for Sonya and Sally to sign. They also remind users that they are available to support the process and any conflicts that might arise.

Culturally Appropriate Safe Space and Engagement Framework for Women+ in Housing Solutions OR Experiential Women+ Circle

How does it work?

Women+ experiencing violence and homelessness or at risk of homelessness are connected to the Women's+ Coalition through collaborative partnerships, word of mouth or internet search.

*Wisdom Holder: one with lived experience



For example, **Layla** hears about the Women+'s Coalition from a support worker.



She is welcomed to a supportive space of resource by a peer, **Corrie**.



They gather and share through weekly Women's+ Coalition Women's+ Circles.



Layla receives One on One Peer guided support to navigate services



The Wisdom holders* lead the space, engage with local governments and bring solutions learnt through listening to influence region, provincial and federal government changes



Collective work and voices are heard by and influence different levels of government

Arts-Based Storytelling

How does it work?



Sonya is stuck in an abusive relationship. She feels isolated from everyone around her.



One night, she finds the courage to leave. However, there's still a long road to go to feeling like herself again.



While at the Violence Against Women shelter, she starts talking to a Peer Support Specialist, who gives her a flier for an art therapy program.



Sonya is hesitant but calls for more info.. A volunteer, Cheryl, explains that the location is private to protect the participants, gives her the location details, and offers to send her a bus ticket.



Sonya decides to attend a session at VNFC the next week, where she meets Cheryl from the phone call and the art therapist who will be holding the workshop.



As Sonya paints and speaks with the other women, she feels less alone and more empowered to tell her story.



After some sessions, the women have enough art to hold an exhibition to amplify the issue of violence against women and to share their stories.



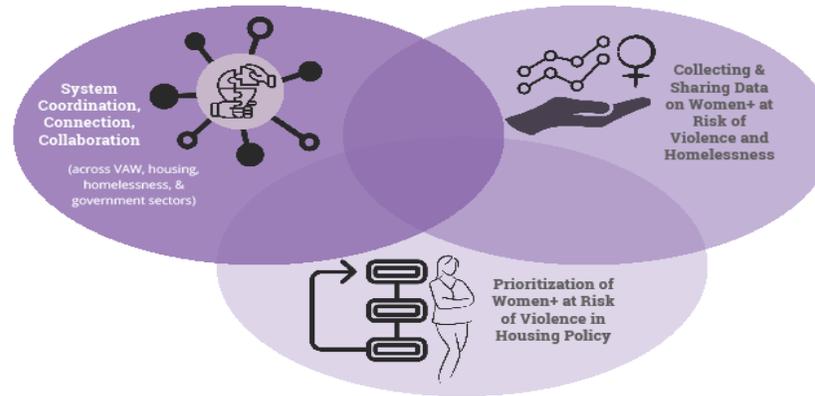
Sonya decides she wants to volunteer/work with the program to help more women.

Our Roadmap

Looking Across the System

OVERALL ROADMAP

Priority Areas of Action



Key Impact Area	Navigation of Housing Systems & Supports	Engagement and Data for Housing Policy and Plans	Availability of Affordable Appropriate Housing	Awareness of Women+ Violence and Homelessness	
PROTOTYPES	<p>System Operations & Safety Peer Navigators</p> <p>Supporting Women+ experiencing gender-based violence to navigate housing services and supports</p>	<p>Women's+ Coalition / Circle</p> <p>A culturally appropriate and supportive peer support space that engages women+ with lived experience and wisdom holders to provide leadership, feedback and influence on the housing policies, plans, and services that directly affect them.</p>	<p>Prioritization of Women+ in the Coordinated Access and Assessment (CAA) Process</p> <p>Using a survey to collect better data on the needs of women+ to inform CAA process and housing policy</p>	<p>Housing Supply Through Shared Accommodation</p> <p>Providing a safer and more sustainable gateway to shared accommodation via a website matching those with rooms to rent with women+ seeking accommodation</p>	<p>Arts-Based Storytelling</p> <p>Providing a safe and inclusive space for women+ to work through trauma using art and stories to raise awareness of violence and homelessness</p>
Established and Potential Collaborators	GVCEH with ACEH, ICA, Cridge, PEERS	GVCEH and ACEH : co-convenors	Potential for CAA working group with support from GVCEH , CRD and UVic	Looking for lead organization	
Sub-Impact Areas being addressed	<p><i>*prioritized prototypes for implementation</i></p> <p> Awareness of Housing/Supports Culturally Appropriate Housing Fear, Safety, Isolation Racism, Discrimination, Stigma and Hidden Homelessness Financial Independence & Stability </p>				

Women+ Fleeing Violence Navigator Web and Mobile Application

Areas of need for Women+ fleeing violence



Dufort & Lando, 2021; created in Canva

Who is the INSPIRE Garage Team?

The INSPIRE Garage Team



Ahmed Momoh



Mobina Rafieipour



Bachan Ghimire



Parker DeBruyne



Payton Chernoff



Proposal for the UVic INSPIRE Program

- The **Women+ Fleeing Violence Navigator Web and Mobile Application** is intended to provide a **single platform** to learn about/access **all services in the Greater Victoria region** that would **be of use to a Woman+** who is **at risk of violence and/or homelessness**.
- It would also be **useful to organizations and front-line workers** who support these women.
- The application would provide sources of basic services, like **food** and **housing**, to more specific resources like **peer support groups**

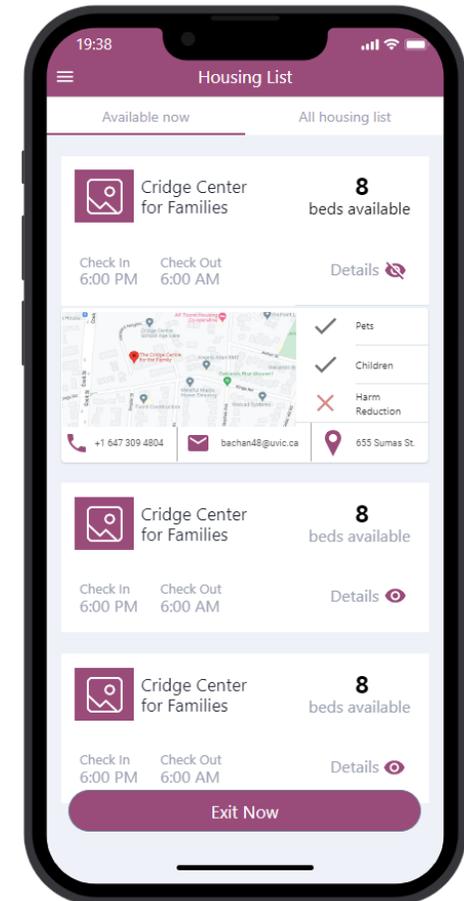
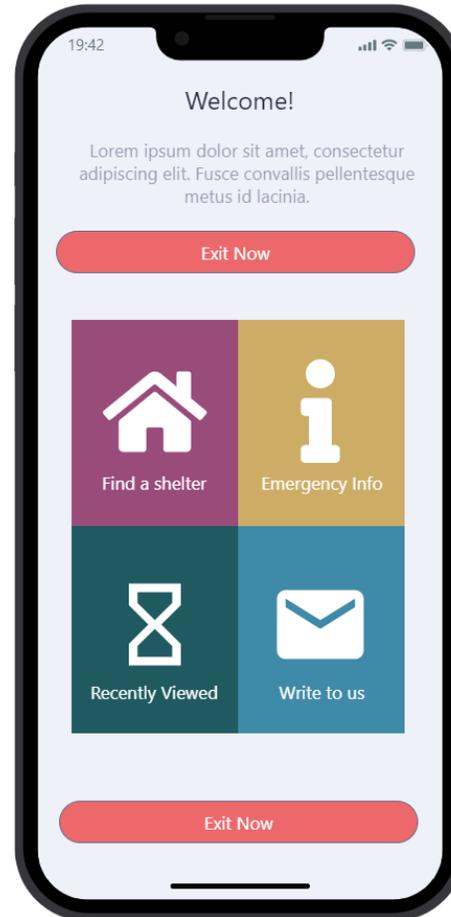
The Women+ Fleeing Violence Navigator Web and Mobile Application: Design

For shelters

- Organization Profile
- Emergency Contact
- Live Changes to Beddings
- Location and Maps
- Knowledge Sharing

For Women+

- Navigate Housing
- Location, Calls and Emails
- Emergency Information
- Quick Contact
- Quick Exit



What Next?



Presentation to the Province of BC

Select Standing Committee on Finance & Government Services

- **Recommendation 1.** Provide **outcomes based multi-year funding** for agencies working on solutions for Women+ At Risk of Violence and Homelessness.
- **Recommendation 2.** Provide 3-year funding for **Peer Navigator positions**
- **Recommendation 3.** Provide funding to resource an **experiential Women+ Council**

You're invited to walk with us along the

PATHWAY TO ACTION

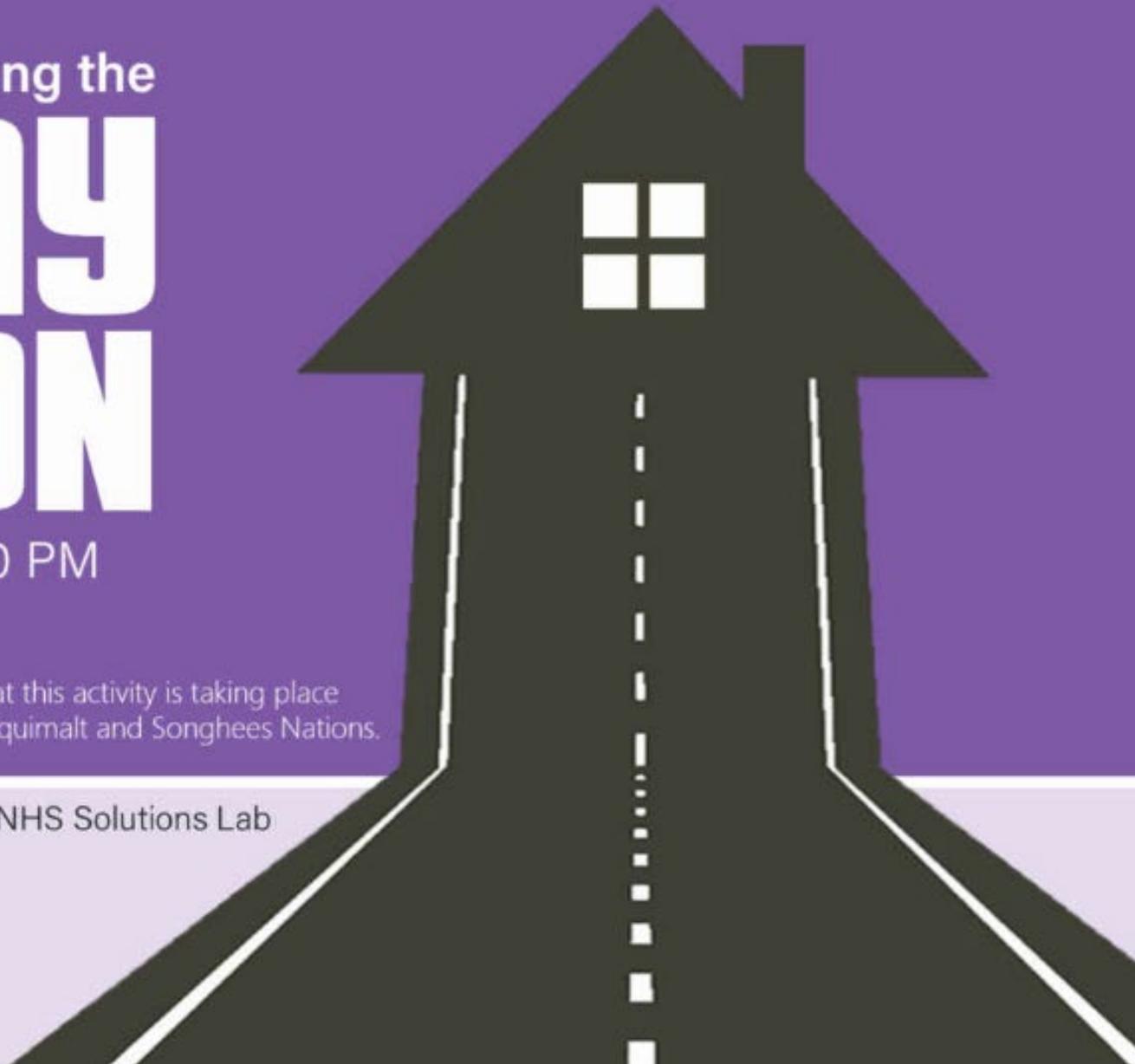
November 15, 2022 | 8:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Delta Ocean Pointe Resort

The event organizers acknowledge with respect and gratitude that this activity is taking place on the homeland of the lək̓wəjən People, known today as the Esquimalt and Songhees Nations.

Ongoing engagement and follow up of the Surfacing Our Strengths NHS Solutions Lab

Solutions lab partners and funder:





greater victoria
coalition to end
homelessness
hope has found a home



STREET SURVIVAL GUIDE



MEALS + FOOD



COMMUNITY PLAN



DONATE NOW

Who We Are

Need Help?

Homelessness 101

Youth

Programs

Get Involved

Updates & Events

Our Resources



Surfacing Our Strengths: Co-Creating Strategic Solutions with Women+ At Risk of Violence and Homelessness

<https://victoriahomelessness.ca/surfacingourstrengths/>



THANK YOU!

Learn more:

<https://victoriahomelessness.ca/surfacingourstrengths/>

Contact Us: admin@victoriahomelessness.ca