



REPORT
ON

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS 2019

LET'S END
YOUTH
HOMELESSNESS



United Way
Kingston, Frontenac,
Lennox and Addington



When I was 10, my parents separated. It was a never ending battle over custody for me and my brother. I was in constant conflict with my step-mother and my father wasn't very supportive. Just before turning 17, I left home. I stayed with friends, until I spoke with a Police operator who connected me with a Youth Services Program. With that support, I was able to get back on my feet.

- Mona, homeless at age 17

Five years ago, Kingston and area had a higher than average youth homeless percentage (one in three, where the national average was one in five). The United Way was selected to coordinate a pilot to mobilize capacity to address youth homelessness in a mid-sized community. Embarking on this journey, we realized that our community needed a targeted, collaborative approach – one that focused on prevention and really identifying the root cause of the issue.

In these past five years we've listened to youth, worked with numerous agencies, school boards, government and representatives from all sectors to collectively learn about the issue of youth homelessness in the area. We've focused on learning from youth about their recommended solutions, we've found resources for coordinating this tremendously broad initiative and, as a result, introduced pilot programs to address root causes and system changes to enhance access. We've realized that an issue like youth homelessness takes time, hard work by all involved, and many, many voices.

We now have more youth participating in programs, being housed, finding supports, and fewer on the street. Our amazing agencies continue to work tirelessly with youth to help them when they need help the most.

Our community has made a lot of progress, but the work isn't done. Collectively, we are working to develop and implement strategies and plans to address rural youth homelessness, mental health and crisis situations among youth and identify the barriers facing Indigenous youth – areas we have identified that need more attention. We continue to work with youth to find out what they want and need to feel safe and comfortable in times of instability.

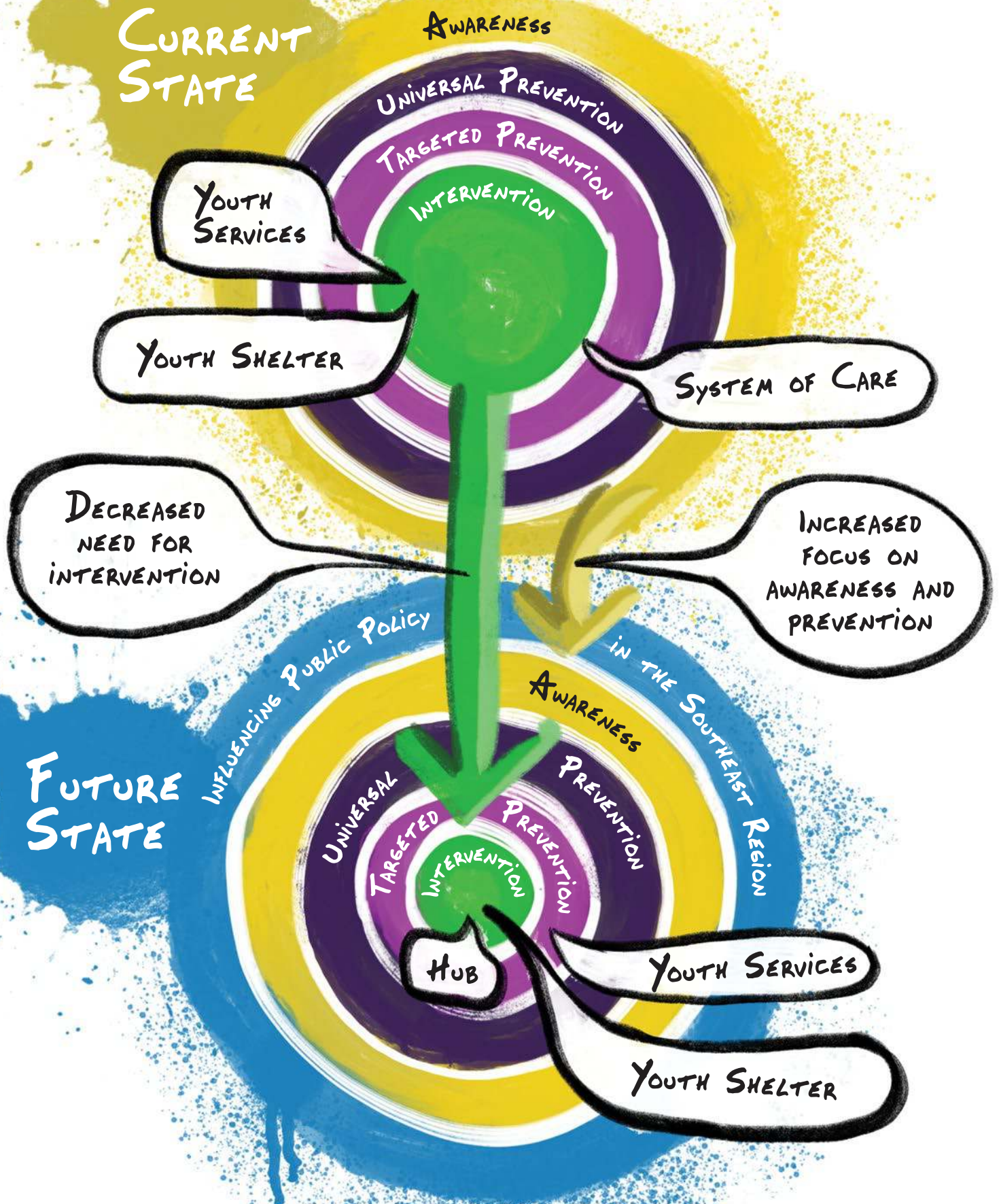
When the group initially took on the issue of youth homelessness, I'm not sure all realized just how large the issue was and still is. Together with our numerous partners, volunteers and a generous and supportive community we are all making a difference and will continue to do so.

I'd like to thank all our partners, agencies, volunteers, who have worked so tirelessly these many years. A special thank you to the courageous and resilient youth who gave us terrific advice, and shared their personal stories in an effort to prevent and end youth homelessness in the region.

Bhavana Varma

CEO, United Way of KFL&A
Chair, Ending Youth Homelessness Initiative

ROLE OF PREVENTION



A Vision for Tomorrow

On any given night, more than 6,000 Canadian youth are homeless.

Young people account for one in five of the people living in Canada's homeless shelters. In 2013, this number was even higher in Kingston at one in three.

Over the past five years, that figure has returned to the national average in Kingston, thanks to a collective effort by the community. We have seen a dramatic drop in the number of youth who are homeless on the streets of downtown Kingston and more in programs and housing, both transitional and permanent. We have prevention programs that divert youth away from shelters and back to their families or allow them to be housed safely.

In 2013, our mission began with the vision of reducing the number of young people using the shelter system. However, as the consultation process gained momentum, it became clear that the root causes of homelessness are complex and require intervention on multiple fronts. And that having more youth inside our support system was a good thing.

The United Way opted to focus on prevention, providing timely intervention, and building a sustainable network of supportive resources. This approach has ensured that youth homelessness in our community becomes a treatable option, rather than a chronic one.

A new vision emerged and continues to be the goal:

“By 2020, 80 percent of youth who enter the homelessness system in KFL&A will be housed within 30 days.”

By pursuing this vision, we have made great strides in our community. We continue to focus our attention and our efforts on identifying and removing the barriers that keep young people from accessing safe, suitable, and sustainable housing, and ensure that every young person in KFL&A has a place to call home.

THE FACE OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN KFL&A

56%
ARE
FEMALE

17
AVERAGE
AGE
YOUTH
SURVEYED
BECAME
HOMELESS

30%
IDENTIFY AS
INDIGENOUS

22%
OF
YOUTH
CAME TO
KINGSTON
FROM SURROUNDING
AREAS



NATIONAL
STATS

65% HAVE
DROPPED OUT OF
SCHOOL

50%
HAVE BEEN IN
JAIL

50% ARE
FROM
MIDDLE OR
UPPER-INCOME
FAMILIES



77% ARE
UNEMPLOYED

Collective Impact: The Road to Realization

In order to realize our vision and turn youth homelessness into a treatable option, the community needed to adopt an approach that is capable of effecting dramatic, community-wide change.

Collective Impact is similar to – yet distinctly different from – other forms of collaboration. The key difference is that the collaborators come from different sectors and work through a centralized infrastructure toward a common goal, finding solutions and addressing root causes of larger community issues.

Working together with the aid of dedicated staff providing “backbone” coordination along with a structured process enables a diverse group of organizational collaborators to work from a common agenda, determine shared values and guiding principles, develop clear measurements, and remain focused on the goal.

Collective Impact initiatives are a key focus of United Way KFL&A's Community Investment Strategy. They help identify pressing issues, address their root causes, develop pilot programs and policies to effect change in our community, and monitor and evaluate progress over time.

United Way KFL&A has employed Collective Impact successfully for close to two decades around a number of issues. This seemed a logical approach to the challenges of addressing youth homelessness.

Through this process, we engaged and continue to engage as many stakeholders as possible, ensuring that our community plans include input from everyone affected by these issues.

Listening to Youth

As the group worked to formulate our Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness, we engaged partners from a range of frontline community agencies – many of whom were working independently of each other to serve the same population. We learned that, by bringing these groups to the same table, the process enabled them to work together, avoid duplication, and exchange vital information and collaborate around their clientele.

We also engaged partners from the private sector, all three levels of government, and the community at large. Most importantly, though, we sought input from young people who have experienced or are currently experiencing homelessness.

A Youth Council was recruited, with a mandate to ensure that the voices and perspectives of youth inform the decisions we make and the programs we design. We recruited participants through the local school boards, youth employment programs, shelters, transitional housing, and programs such as Youth Diversion, Y2K, Pathways to Education, and the local Boys and Girls Club. Our participants provided invaluable insight into the lives of young people experiencing homelessness, and inspired and contributed to the solutions that became the Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness.

One of the critical insights they shared was that young people are reluctant to trust even the most well-intentioned adults. This insight has influenced all aspects of the Plan, as it has taught us that perhaps the biggest obstacle to success will be earning the trust of youth who are homeless and inspiring them to make use of the available services.

For these reasons, one of the Plan's most important strategies continues to be using the voices of youth who are homeless whenever possible.

Steering Committee and Leadership

A foundational component of Collective Impact is centralized or “backbone” coordination. The United Way provides this critical element to ensure that the process retains momentum and projects are funded and implemented.

The United Way chairs the Steering Committee, providing leadership and backbone coordination of events, committee meetings, data collection, tracking and evaluation, and conversations with youth, partners and funders, to keep the plan moving forward.

The Steering Committee meets monthly and provides input and advice at every step of the way. The Youth Council continues to meet regularly, providing their insights and coordinating annual forums for youth.

A Plan to End Youth Homelessness

As youth shared their stories and insights, we acquired a wealth of new information that has enabled the initiative to see youth homelessness from the perspective of those who have experienced it first-hand. This new perspective has given rise to new understandings, new objectives, and new strategies for addressing homelessness issues among young people.

A Deeper Understanding

One important learning that emerged from this process was a deeper understanding of how youth homelessness differs from adult homelessness.

The key differentiator is that where homeless adults have nowhere to live, most youth who are homeless still have the option of returning to their family homes. A plan to address youth homelessness, then, must consider making a return to the family home a viable option.

Unlike adult homelessness, youth homelessness can be viewed as a temporary condition rather than a chronic one, and the set of solutions can include educational components that may not be as effective with a chronically homeless older population.

Another important consideration that applies uniquely to youth homelessness is that young people are still developing. The risk-taking and reactive behaviours and poor impulse control that are often associated with developing minds are a contributing factor to youth homelessness, making addressing developmental issues critical to any solution.

Collecting data

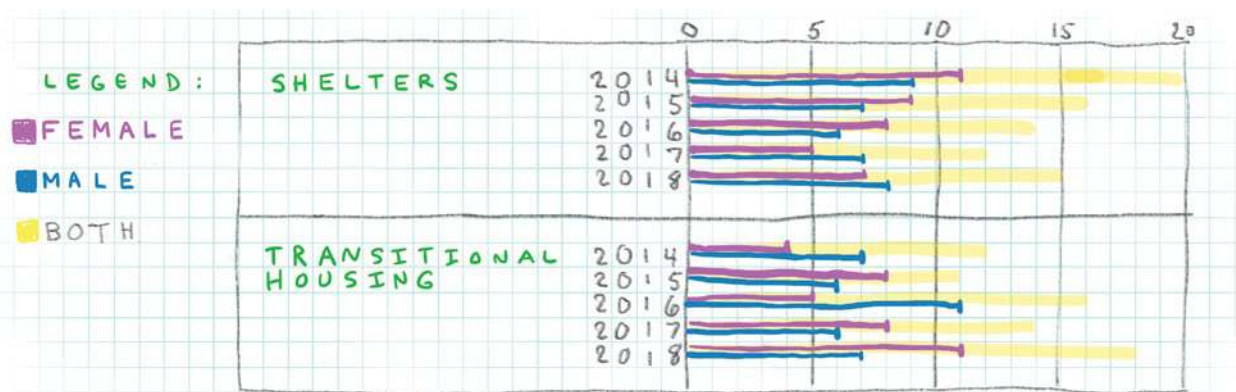
An important piece in understanding the issue was collecting data and statistics.

An annual Point in Time Count is conducted to track the number of youth who are absolutely homeless. We learned early on that Kingston had a higher rate of youth homelessness than the average across the country – one in three people in shelters in Kingston were youth in 2013. Thanks to our community-wide efforts, we have seen a positive change in this area – this past year, just one in five people in shelters in Kingston were youth.

Through the 2018 Point in Time count we learned that 30 percent of youth who are homeless identified as Indigenous

We also learned that our community had a higher rate of female youth who are homeless, with over 50 percent of youth who are homeless being female in 2018. The average across the country is 20 percent.

The annual Youth Point in Time (PiT) count is done through shelters and transitional housing units, giving us real numbers of youth who are “absolutely homeless”.



Home Base Housing has a community outreach program to learn more about people who are homeless on the streets of downtown Kingston. In 2013, fifty percent of them were youth; this number dropped to 17% in 2016 and in 2017 there were hardly any youth identified through the street count.

A New Definition

We discovered that many young people who were homeless did not consider themselves homeless because they technically had a roof over their heads. These youth, many of whom “couch surf” with friends or relatives, are rarely counted among the homeless population. In helping them understand their situations, we have been able to achieve a more accurate picture of the extent of youth homelessness in KFL&A.

A process was developed in 2013 to capture trends in youth who are precariously housed and still in school. Adolescent care workers in high schools provide us with the number of youth who they know are precariously housed.

Students are not identified by name, nor is the information provided by schools intended to be an exact science. Rather, it helps to provide a better understanding of the breadth of this issue, as we know that often teachers are the first to become aware of youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This provides us with estimates that are tracked year over year. Over time, we have observed more youth identifying as precariously housed and more educators are aware of youth living in precarious housing situations.

As a result, 167 youth were identified as precariously housed in 2018

Break down: Kingston –125 Frontenac –26 L&A –16

Exploring Root Causes

Listening to young people provided us with insight into how youth homelessness can occur. Youth participants helped us identify the primary root causes:

Family conflict: Conflict between youth and parents and/or siblings is the single largest contributing factor to youth homelessness in KFL&A.

Addictions and mental health: Addictions and mental health issues are contributing factors to youth homelessness, as they are with adult homelessness.

Education and unemployment: Barriers to completing education and developing skills (job skills and life skills) are key contributors to youth unemployment, which is three to four times higher than the adult unemployment rate in Kingston.

When I was 15, I lived out of my duffel bag. It was very heavy, it contained everything I had. I asked to stay at friends' houses or slept in the backs of office buildings. I found a housing program that also had support for mental health. It felt great to have my own bed and be able to eat breakfast. Now I volunteer helping other youth.

- Brandon,
homeless at age 15



Successes to Date

Understanding the nature of youth homelessness and its root causes has enabled us to focus our attention and efforts on the areas that have the greatest need and will have the greatest impact on preventing and ending youth homelessness in our region. By establishing and/or strengthening these areas, we can ensure that the appropriate services are in place to allow young people to treat the causes of their homelessness and end it before it becomes chronic.

Since the Plan's implementation, several new initiatives have been realized, with chartable progress achieved in each area of focus.

Homelessness Prevention

In order to prevent homelessness, it is necessary to address its root causes. The Plan calls for strategic investment in programs.

Family Conflict

Family Mediation: The United Way funds a full-time family mediation worker at the Kingston Youth Shelter's Family Support Program. This worker provides supportive services to address conflict, improve communication and facilitate healthy reunions between youth and their families. This worker has counselled 134 youth and their families with a 95 percent success rate. In three years, all but six of the youth were able to return home successfully or find a safe place to live, connected with family supports.

Addiction and Mental Health

Youth Outreach: United Way provides funding for a Youth Outreach Worker to provide cognitive therapy and referrals to youth who are homeless with mental health issues. This program is provided through Addictions & Mental Health Services KFL&A. More than 150 young people have received support through this service.

Intersections: This program is delivered by Youth Diversion and provides intervention, navigation, and coordination of services for children and youth under age 18 who are at risk of becoming involved with the justice system. Through this program, police can make service referrals for children who, while not engaged in criminal activities, still exhibit serious behaviour problems. Since its introduction, the program has served more than 93 youth in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington, the youngest being six years old.

As a result of initial United Way KFLA funding for a pilot, Youth Diversion has secured a 3 year Grow Grant through the Ontario Trillium Foundation to support the expansion of Intersections.

LGBTQ+ Mental Health: In the most recent Kingston Point in Time count, 37 percent of youth who were homeless identified as LGBTQ+. United Way provides funding to Canadian Mental Health Association to facilitate a program that addresses the mental health of gender-diverse youth in a safe place.

LGBTQ+ Supports: FUSE, is a group for queer, trans*, gender queer, two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual and questioning youth, provided by HIV/AIDS Regional services (HARS) at One Roof Youth Hub in Kingston.



11% OF SURVEYED YOUTH IDENTIFIED AS TRANSGENDER OR GENDER NON-CONFORMING



37% OF SURVEYED YOUTH IDENTIFIED AS LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL OR QUEER

An Integrated System of Care

Many of the youth expressed frustration with a system that can be difficult to navigate. Several of our initiatives are designed to simplify the system so that users can access the services they need easily and conveniently.

System Mapping and Protocol Development:

We continue to work with partners to establish systems and protocols to help young people access services easily. To ensure that services are accessible and convenient for young users, increased coordination is necessary. This includes information sharing and coordination between service providers and the 211 service to ensure that 211 agents provide callers with the best possible information. Many improvements to the system have been effected to date, however this complex process is an ongoing project.

Youth Hub in Kingston: One Roof, Kingston's Youth Hub, opened in 2017 at 426 Barrie Street. Home Base Housing is the 'backbone' organization providing financial and other administrative assistance to the project. One Roof is a partnership between 27 organizations providing a range of services to youth in one convenient location. For more information, visit: <http://kingstonhomebase.ca/kingston-youth-services>

Working together in a single location allows young people to build stronger and more trusting relationships with services and individual staff. Services include showers, food, counselling, housing access, education, and skills training.

In its first year, One Roof served **215** unique clients.

In addition to collaboration among all the organizations serving youth at this location, funding One Roof has required creativity, collaboration and multiple sources of funding. The United Way supports core services through a large grant to cover the cost of accommodation and staffing. Additionally, agencies provide their services through their own existing resources; many of these positions are funded by the United Way, the City of Kingston and provincial ministries.

L&A Youth Hub – Youth have told us that many services are being offered by agencies in Lennox & Addington. It was recommended by a steering committee and youth who were consulted, that a central location would increase access to these, particularly for youth who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless and/or precariously housed.

Prince Edward Lennox & Addington Social Services and United Way jointly supported the creation of the L&A Youth Hub in the Memorial Building in Napanee. Modeled after One Roof in Kingston, 21 partner organizations will provide a range of services and programming to reduce barriers for youth accessing services in the region.*

Closing Gaps in Early Response Services: United Way and the City of Kingston provide funding for youth workers to coordinate prevention, diversion, and housing-first services. The system has seen an increase in the number of youth needing longer-term support.

More Housing Options

In addition to supportive services, the greatest need for youth remains housing. We have undertaken several initiatives to increase the number of affordable housing options for youth who are homeless or precariously housed in KFL&A.

Transformation of the Homelessness Services

System: United Way and the steering committee works closely with the City of Kingston and partners to focus on housing first, homelessness prevention, diversion for youth, eviction prevention, and providing more affordable housing options that meet the needs of youth.

Transitional Housing Program: While traditional Housing First programs do not identify transitional housing as a solution to homelessness, we quickly learned that, for youth, transitional housing is often an important step toward permanent housing. It allows youth the time to heal, recover, and develop the skills that will enable them to succeed in living independently.

With the 2016 opening of a six-person transitional home for youth aged 16-19, Kingston is now home to increased transitional housing programs, offering transitional living options for 24 youth for up to 24 months.

The Kingston Youth Shelter Transition program provides living accommodations, life skills training, and counselling for youth to facilitate the transition to independent living.

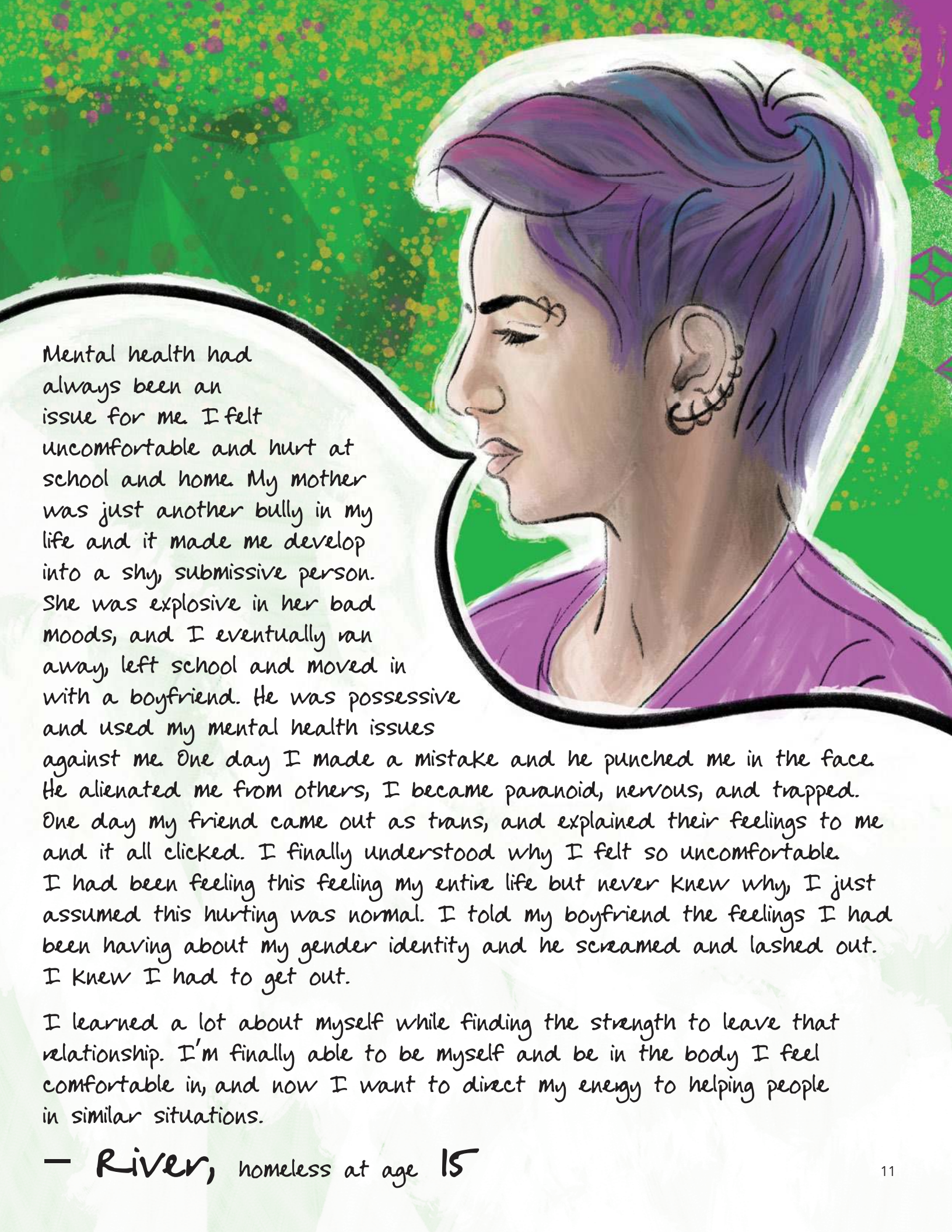
Currently, 100 percent of residents in transitional housing are working full-time and attending school. Overall, 11 youth have graduated from the program to date. All of them have moved on to stable independent living arrangements.

Additionally the United Way supports another Transitional Housing program at Rise@149, a transitional housing program run by Home Base Housing with 21 self-contained apartments for youth.

Expanding the Role of the Emergency Shelter:

Since the shelter is the first point of contact for many youth who are homeless, it's important that their services include, not just beds, but access and referrals to prevention, diversion, and housing services. The Kingston Youth Shelter has expanded its suite of services and supports to include two transitional homes and the Family Mediation Program; prevention-diversion and housing worker services, supporting youth who move from the shelter into independent living.

Exploring Policy Changes: Ontario Works has reviewed its policies to ensure they are serving youth in the best way possible. The OW program continues this review to ensure that the changes implemented are best meeting the needs of youth

A stylized illustration of a person with short, wavy purple hair, shown in profile from the chest up. They are looking downwards and to the left. The person has a purple top and a visible earplug in their left ear. The background is a vibrant green with a pattern of small yellow and purple dots. A large, white, hand-drawn speech bubble is positioned on the left side of the image, containing handwritten text. The overall style is artistic and expressive, using bold outlines and a rich color palette.

Mental health had always been an issue for me. I felt uncomfortable and hurt at school and home. My mother was just another bully in my life and it made me develop into a shy, submissive person. She was explosive in her bad moods, and I eventually ran away, left school and moved in with a boyfriend. He was possessive and used my mental health issues against me. One day I made a mistake and he punched me in the face. He alienated me from others, I became paranoid, nervous, and trapped. One day my friend came out as trans, and explained their feelings to me and it all clicked. I finally understood why I felt so uncomfortable. I had been feeling this feeling my entire life but never knew why, I just assumed this hurting was normal. I told my boyfriend the feelings I had been having about my gender identity and he screamed and lashed out. I knew I had to get out.

I learned a lot about myself while finding the strength to leave that relationship. I'm finally able to be myself and be in the body I feel comfortable in, and now I want to direct my energy to helping people in similar situations.

— **River**, homeless at age 15

Sparking Dialogue

Education and Awareness Campaign:

It was identified that a comprehensive communications plan was needed to support the goals and strategies of the Action Plan. A three-pronged approach was adopted by the steering committee to achieve the communication goal of changing community attitudes positively.

- Targeted intervention for youth at risk/youth who are homeless
- Increase awareness of the issue of youth homelessness among students in Grade 7 and upwards, schools, educators and families
- Reduce stigma associated with youth homelessness among the general public

The campaign, launched in 2016, features stories of youth who have experienced homelessness and have successfully obtained support from community organizations. The stories address the myths of youth homelessness and the causes, providing opportunities for education and increased understanding among all intended audiences.

To complement the strategy and increase awareness of the issue, videos were produced by youth.

These videos and stories can be found at www.unitedwaykfla.ca/youth.

Youth homelessness was a featured issue in the United Way's community fundraising campaign and a number of workplaces and events included talks from youth who had previously been homeless.

Youth homelessness has also been featured through Kingston Transit with youth stories appearing on buses throughout the city. The stories point to the causes of youth homelessness and provide information on services that are available in the community.

Highlights of the awareness campaign also included a number of events in 2018:

Lieutenant Governor Visit: The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Elizabeth Dowdeswell, visited Kingston on January 18, 2018. The goal of the day was to share the community's collective approach to end youth homelessness in Kingston and area, and how it positively impacts on approaches for inclusive prosperity and social cohesion.

While in Kingston, she attended a roundtable discussion at Memorial Hall and also visited Kingston's youth hub, One Roof. She heard stories from local youth with lived experience and learned more about successful youth homelessness reduction initiatives.

Mental Health Planning Day: A Youth Mental Health Planning Day was held on March 23, 2018 at the Discovery Centre at Fort Henry. The day was co-chaired by Mike McDonald (Kingston Health Sciences Centre) and Bhavana Varma (United Way KFLA). Over eighty participants including youth attended the session bringing a wealth of perspectives to the discussion. The day included: several briefings from people working in the field; some sharing from youth of their lived experiences; and three facilitated interactive sessions.

From this planning day, a Youth Mental Health Strategic Committee was formed to develop a plan and strategies that address identified issues in our community related to transitional aged youth and those in crisis.

Queen's Park Day: On March 26, 2018, Sophie Kiwala, then MPP for Kingston and The Islands, organized a second Youth Homelessness Awareness Day at Queen's Park, coordinated through United Way KFLA. The day brought together representatives from United Ways across Ontario with MPP's of all parties to highlight the issue and the progress that can be made through collective impact in communities.

Forums:

Youth spoke often about the need to educate their peers about the causes of youth homelessness and what can be done to prevent a youth from becoming homeless.

Youth Forum: The Youth Council organizes a Youth Summit each year. In 2018, the fourth annual Youth Summit was attended by more than 80 youth. Together they increased awareness through practical, interactive workshops on topics that are important to youth.

Educators' Forum: Schools are often a place of trust and safety for youth, and a place where they can access supports and services. Youth reminded us that it was important to share information with educators, as many youth will turn to a trusted person at school, and as they learned from their own experiences, many of their counsellors and teachers were not aware of where to send them.

Local school boards have been instrumental in working with the initiative on educating students and educators on the issue. As a result of input at these forums, a Youth Services Listing was developed to help connect youth with local programs and services.

www.unitedwaykfla.ca/youth

New initiatives

In the coming months, while we continue to make progress on our current initiatives, we have undertaken several new initiatives.

Youth in Frontenac County: Rural youth have needs that differ from their urban counterparts. The steering committee recognizes the need to tailor our programs toward youth living in the rural portions of our region.

The Rural Youth Liaison pilot project was introduced to better understand, support and address the unique needs of youth in Frontenac County, with a focus on those experiencing homelessness, or, who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Through the support of two new rural youth outreach worker positions, initiatives and programs are being developed in the area to start addressing the needs.

A total of 28 youth in Frontenac County have received direct support from the youth outreach workers. This includes 3 youth experiencing homelessness, who have been placed within safe/stable living environments in their home/school community.

Mental Health: Following the Youth Mental Health Planning Day, and building on the great work being done by the "Moving on Mental Health" group, work for this initiative has continued in three areas:

- 24 hour walk-in for crisis support
- Post-crisis and peer support
- Post-emergency discharge planning

The Youth Mental Health Strategic Committee has begun developing strategies to divert youth in crisis from the emergency room. They are exploring the idea of a 24-hour walk-in safe space for youth.

Youth peer support models for crisis and post-crisis are also being explored, along with better systems and discharge planning for youth leaving hospital after experiencing a mental health emergency.

Youth Mental Health Services Planning Day 2.0 is being planned to continue to develop solutions and strategies for youth in need of mental health supports.

Strategy for Indigenous Youth: Indigenous youth is another population with needs that are not yet adequately met in the existing system. We will explore strategies to determine and meet those needs. To learn more about how to approach this issue, we have started speaking with different groups and individuals to gain insights including Elders to gain a better understanding of the unique needs of Indigenous youth.

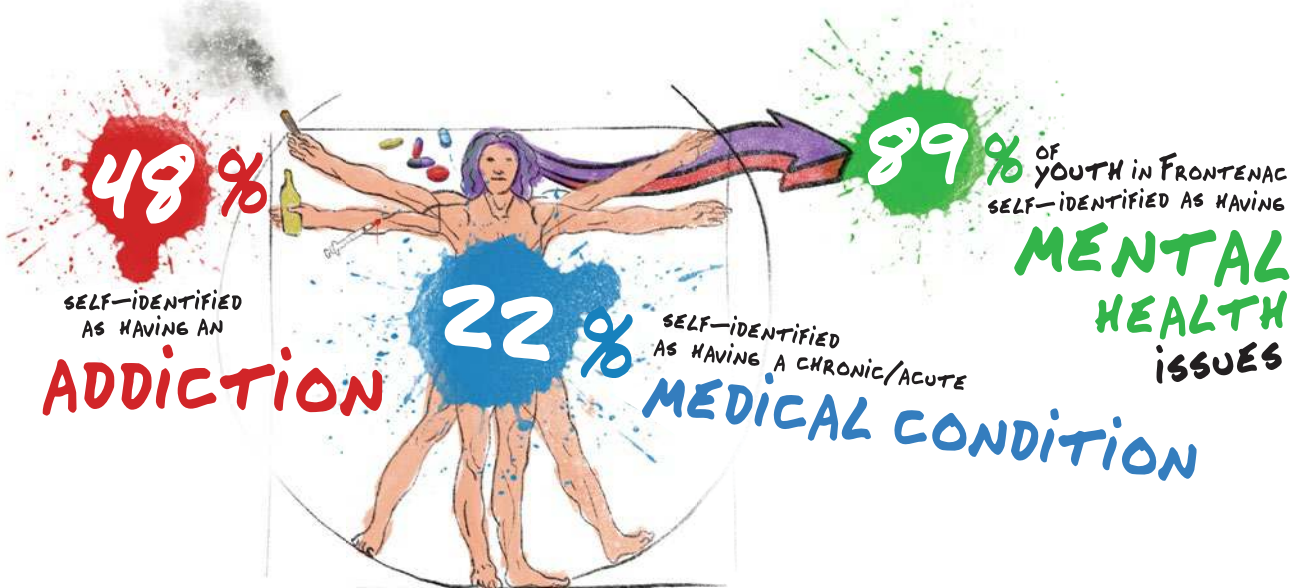
Cultural awareness workshops have been offered to staff who work directly with youth and indigenous programs are being incorporated into service delivery.

Focus on Female Youth: We know that we have a high rate of female homelessness (higher than the Canadian average) and a high rate of human trafficking, addictions and mental health among women of all ages in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington.

Service providers see a larger number of female youth using services with 45 percent of youth using One Roof identifying as female. More than half of the 134 youth served by Family Mediation were also female.

United Way's Women United Committee is focusing their attention on the high rate of female homelessness and high rate of human trafficking, addictions and mental health among women of all ages in Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington. They are exploring a partnership with Queen's University to learn why Kingston has a high number of vulnerable women, in hopes of developing a research initiative to identify root causes.

Youth Wellness Hub: Currently the youth shelter is stretched for space and One Roof has received significant funding to enhance One Roof's community response using a crime prevention model. In order to introduce clinical and other programs more space is needed. The City of Kingston and United Way are facilitating discussions to see if there are opportunities to collaborate and create a youth hub to address shelter, coordinated services and potentially a safe space for youth in crisis, emergency needs.



Funding

The United Way Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington provides funding for the development and implementation of the Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness and many of the projects that emerge from it. Funding for the initiative comes from a variety of sources:

Kingston Penitentiary Tours

When Kingston Penitentiary closed its doors in 2013, Correctional Service of Canada worked with United Way to conduct fundraising tours of the vacant facility for three weeks. These funds (\$170,000) were dedicated to youth initiatives and helped to fund some of the initial work, with input from the Steering Committee.

Since 2016, St. Lawrence Parks Commission, the City of Kingston, and Correctional Service of Canada have partnered to run tours through the summer with 50 percent of the profits coming to United Way for its youth initiatives. The United Way received \$322,000 from tour proceeds in 2016, \$800,000 in 2017, and \$921,000 in 2018 which was used to develop the plan, fund backbone coordination, education and awareness, and programs and initiatives that emerged from the plan.

Innoweave Grant

In 2016 the Innoweave Foundation approved a large grant to support the Collective Impact process for data collection, plan development, and evaluation. The funds were also used to support the development of the education and awareness plan and collaterals, and some pilot initiatives outlined in the Plan.

Transformational Gift

Kingston-based philanthropist A. Britton Smith, owner of Homestead Land Holdings Ltd., made a transformational gift of \$1.2 million to the United Way in 2016 – the single largest one-time gift in this United Way's history. Mr. Smith's donation was used to create and fund a transitional-living facility that provides accommodation, counselling, and life skills training for youth aged 16 to 19. The house is Kingston Youth Shelter's second transitional housing program for youth who are homeless, increasing the available youth transitional housing units from 18 to 24. The funding covers the program's expenses for its first five years.

City of Kingston Homelessness Plan

In developing its 10-year homelessness plan, the City of Kingston agreed to partner with United Way and collaborate on strategies developed through the youth homelessness initiative. The partnership has resulted in a robust and iterative plan to support youth who are homeless in the region. City and United Way staff continue to work together to find ways to evaluate and enhance the system.

United Way Community Investment

United Way funds some of the core programs that provide support to youth who are homeless or precariously housed through its partner agency funding process. These include youth services at the Kingston Youth Shelter, Home Base Housing, Canadian Mental Health Association and Youth Diversion.

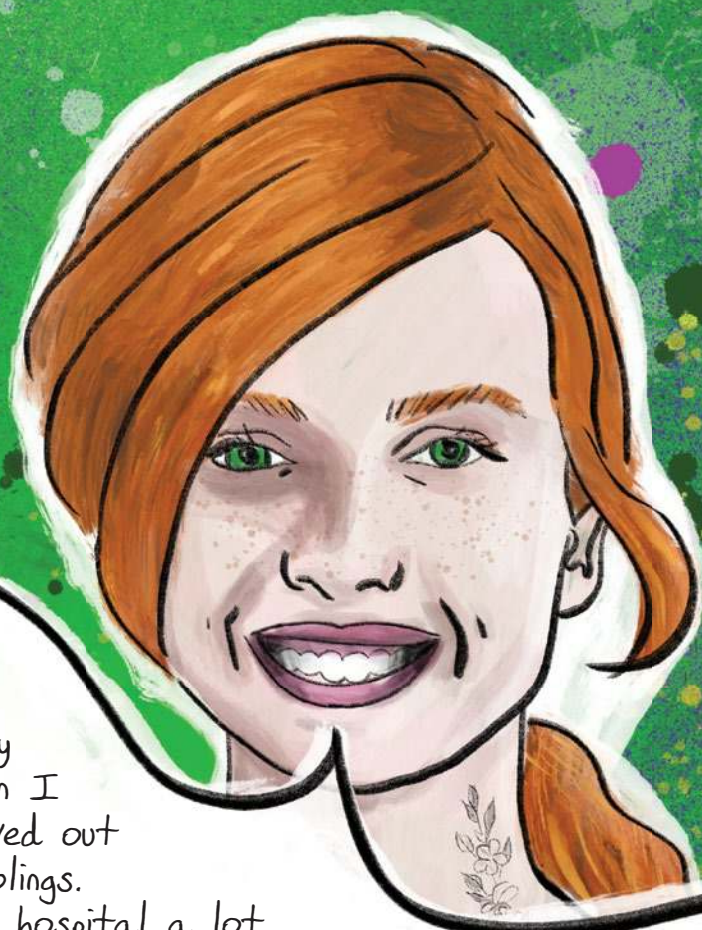
List of Partners

| | |
|---|---|
| Addiction and Mental Health Services KFL&A | Maltby Centre |
| Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board | Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services |
| Alma Mater Society of Queen's University | Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte |
| Boys and Girls Club of Kingston and Area | Napanee & Area Community Health Centre |
| Canadian Mental Health Association | One Roof Kingston Youth Services Hub |
| City of Kingston | Ontario Provincial Police |
| Enyonkwa'nikonhriyo:hake Program | Pathways to Education |
| Family and Children's Services of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington | Prince Edward - Lennox & Addington Social Services |
| Home Base Housing | RBC |
| KEYS Job Centre | Resolve Counselling Services |
| KFL&A Public Health | Rural Frontenac Community Services |
| Kingston Community Health Centre | Southern Frontenac Community Services |
| Kingston Health Sciences Centre | St. Lawrence Youth Association |
| Kingston Interval House | United Way of KFL&A |
| Kingston Police | Youth 2 Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington |
| Kingston Youth Shelter | Youth Diversion |
| Lennox and Addington Interval House | Youthab |
| Limestone District School Board | |



My "Friends" dropped me in high school, I felt invisible. I started smoking pot. My parents didn't approve and kicked me out. I met an older boyfriend who sold drugs, I was doing cocaine every day. My school arranged for me to meet with a counsellor from Youth Diversion. He let me know I wasn't alone, and saw something in me that I couldn't see myself. I finished college and now I work at a school helping kids like myself.

- Abigail, homeless at age 16



I am 17 years old and have lived in Frontenac county all of my life. When I was 10 my mom moved out with my 2 older siblings.

My mom was in the hospital a lot.

She wasn't able to care for me so I stayed behind with my dad. He struggled with bills and most of the time we had no heat, and were short of food. I missed a lot of school because I had to keep the wood stove burning and the water running. My dad has mental health problems and he would have angry outbursts and kicked me out of the house a lot. I couch surfed and never knew where I was going to stay next.

Having my family break down was really hard on me, I constantly worried and I felt alone. I began to develop anxiety and depression and I didn't know where to turn to get help.

When I was 16, I began working with the Rural Youth Worker. Since then, I have been referred to a mental health worker, have gotten onto Ontario Works and now am living with a room mate in the village where I grew up. I no longer feel so alone and I know where to turn for help when I need it.

My goal now is to focus on getting the right medical attention, completing my high school education and I feel I can now positively look towards my future.

— Olive, homeless at age 16