

A Way Home Committee

Terms of Reference

September 2014

1. Definitions:

a. In these Terms of Reference:

- i. Youth: A young person between the ages of 14 – 25 who is experiencing or at risk of homelessness.
- ii. Supportive Housing: Housing which provides wrap-around, 24/7 support to ensure a successful transition to independent living. Program participants have a formalized agreement that is based on a mutually agreed-upon plan, with goals to be achieved with the support of staff.
- iii. Program participant agreement: Where housing is attached to a program agreement rather than the Residential Tenancy Act; the service provider is the “tenant”; the client agrees to participate in programming, with housing contingent on participation.
- iv. Involvement with MCFD: Having an open file at some point in their youth with the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- v. Homelessness: Without affordable or appropriate accommodation; may include staying in shelter, in provisional housing, couch-surfing or sleeping rough.
- vi. A Way Home: the plan to end youth homelessness in Kamloops, resulting from 2 years of research led by the City of Kamloops, Thompson Nicola Cariboo United Way, the Kamloops Homelessness Action Plan, and the Kamloops Aboriginal Friendship Society in partnership with Eva’s Initiatives, the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association, and the Catherine Donnelly Foundation.
- vii. Others?

2. Establishment:

In early 2014, a community group emerged that was focused on the issues of youth homelessness and youth transitioning out of foster care, called the Youth Supportive Housing Committee. Concurrently, a great deal of research was being undertaken in the community, led by the City of Kamloops, examining the local context for youth homelessness - the specific challenges, the causes, and the service gaps.

In June 2014, when this research was released as a full report called *A Way Home*, the grassroots Youth Supportive Housing Committee made the decision to take ownership of the plan. Their intent is to guide its implementation and to lead the work to end youth homelessness in Kamloops. A Way Home will also act as a partner committee to HomeFree, which is the primary body leading the homelessness efforts in the community.

3. Mandate:

The Mission of this committee is to focus on the Implementation of *A Way Home: A plan to end youth homelessness in Kamloops*, which focuses on the 3 areas of Prevention, Housing & Support with the overall purpose of reducing youth homelessness in Kamloops. The Committee operates under the Housing First approach, understanding the need for a continuum of support services that promotes the healthy development and successful transition of youth to adulthood. Our committee will Collaborate, Plan, and Monitor the success of the Implementation Plan. (*Needs more*)

4. Duties & Responsibilities:

- a. The group will:
 - i. Act as the Steering Committee that guides the implementation of *A Way Home: A plan to end youth homelessness in Kamloops*.
 - ii. Continuously plan, set goals and carry out the action items determined by the Committee membership
 - iii. Ensure the Committee membership includes stakeholders from a variety of sectors such as: all 3 levels of government, schools, health authorities, police/corrections, private sector, and potential funders.
 - iv. Ensure the Committee includes a strong youth voice, to ensure Committee actions are grounded in the experience & unique needs of youth.
 - v. Form a partnership with the HomeFree Council as a Partner Committee, sharing information and expertise and attending Council meetings as needed
 - vi. Determine a decision making and governing strategy that committee members will abide by
 - vii. Continually review and clarify its Terms of Reference to reflect the goals of the Committee and the implementation plan of *A Way Home: A plan to end youth homelessness in Kamloops*
 - viii. Secure funds through a variety of means to hire a Coordinator and undertake project work where necessary
 - ix. Evaluate the progress & and outcomes of the Committee, Coordinator, and their collective work; make changes where necessary
 - x. Identify and develop a youth-based pilot project
 - xi. Establish ways to remove systemic barriers to providing supportive housing for youth.
 - xii. Publicly speak and advocate for the needs of homelessness or at-risk youth and inform the community of Committee progress.
 - xiii. Network with other agencies and projects within other communities that support youth.
 - xiv. Support the work of agencies that provide services focused on preventing youth homelessness.

Membership:

- a. Current membership includes:
 - i. Katherine McParland ASK Wellness, Chair
 - ii. Kira Haug ASK Wellness, Voting Member
 - iii. Amy Baskin ASK Wellness, Voting Member
 - iv. Rikki Barden ASK Wellness, Voting Member
 - v. Danielle Kreutzer AXIS Family Resources, Voting Member
 - vi. Devin Gambler Bladerunners (John Howard Society), Voting Member
 - vii. Traci Anderson Boys & Girls Club of Kamloops, Voting Member
 - viii. Claire Macleod City of Kamloops, Non-voting Member
 - ix. Shelly Bonnah Interior Community Services, Voting Member
 - x. Renata Saat Interior Community Services, Voting Member
 - xi. Leann Kopytko Phoenix Centre, Voting Member
 - xii. Christopher Hunt Poverty Reduction Initiative (MCFD), Voting Member
 - xiii. Rhoda Tom Boys & Girls Club of Kamloops, Voting Member

- xiv. Donna Sowden Twin Rivers Education Centre, Voting Member
- xv. Laurel Scott Interior Community Services, Recording Secretary

b. Composition

- i. The group shall be comprised of XX members, representing the following sectors or organizations:
 - i. Youth-serving agencies, including those offering mental health, addictions, life skills, outreach and housing services
 - ii. Ministry of Children and Family Development
 - iii. Education
 - iv. Aboriginal organizations
 - v. Foster parents
 - vi. Youth who have experienced homelessness (aged 14 – 18 and 19 – 25)
- ii. The membership will identify sectors, organizations or key stakeholders who need to be engaged in the work of A Way Home to ensure the membership is robust and effective. Identified stakeholders will be approached by the Chair or other members to invite participation.

5. Appointment:

- a. Appointments to the group shall be made as follows:
 - i. Any member of any community organization that serves youth or prevents homelessness may apply to the group for membership. A group member will nominate them and they will be accepted if they have a commitment to the cause and committee.
 - ii. The committee will focus on increasing representation to include key stakeholders, including private sectors, schools, funders, provincial ministries, and police or corrections.
- b. If a vacancy should occur during the term of any member for any reason, the Committee shall immediately appoint a person to fill the vacancy for the balance of the said term. Ideally, each member will select an appropriate alternate representative from their respective organization.

6. Term:

- a. The term of each Member shall be a minimum of 2 years up to a lifetime. The committee will meet once to twice a month, depending on need.

7. Governance:

- a. The group meets monthly or more as necessary
- b. 50% of voting members shall constitute a quorum. For instances when a member is not in attendance, on issues where the memberships names will be attached to actions these individuals will be contacted for consent
- c. Minutes of the meetings must be taken by the Chair/Coordinator/Recording Secretary and must be:
 - i. approved by the group at the following meeting,
 - ii. archived by the Chair/Coordinator, and
 - iii. made available to the public upon request