

Call to Action Report



**Rooted in Mission.
Ready for Change.**

A Gathering to End
Youth Homelessness

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Join our coalition of disrupters! Together we can end youth homelessness in NB.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 17th, 2025 Centre for Youth Care and Youth Impact Jeunesse brought together Educators, healthcare providers, government representatives, and community members for a province-wide conversation on how to end youth homelessness in New Brunswick.

The message throughout the room was clear: **youth homelessness is preventable, and New Brunswick already has many of the building blocks needed to end it** – strong relationships, effective programs, and dedicated people. What is missing is consistency, coordination, youth-specific housing, early intervention, and system reforms that match the complexity of young people's lives.

“ Did we protect what was familiar,
or did we build what was needed?”



Keynote speaker, Iain De Jong is CEO & President of OrgCode Consulting, author of *“The Book on Ending Homelessness,”* and the founder of The Leadership Academy of Ending Homelessness, challenged listeners to prioritize youth and youth needs at the center of all decisions and actions.

Other speakers & panelists included **Lindsie McCumber**, Centre for Youth Care Frontline Staff, **Jessica Gallant**, Centre for Youth Care admin assistant/ lived experience of foster care, **Honourable David Hickey**, Minister of Housing/ MLA for Saint John Harbour, **Kelly Lamrock**, Province of NB, Child, Youth, & Senior Advocate, **Julia Woodhall-Melnik**, UNB professor, Canada Research Chair in Resilient Communities, **Tracy Cormier**, Youth Impact Jeunesse, Associate Director, Youth QUEST, **Chris Gorman**, OrgCode Consulting, Senior Associate, **Cory Herc**, Human Development Council, Reaching Home Implementation Manager, **Trevor Goodwin**, Codiac RCMP, Community Intervention Officer, **Dr. Duncan Webster**, Saint John Regional Hospital, Horizon Health Network, Infectious Diseases Physician and Medical Microbiologist, **Karen Cummings**, Centre for Youth Care, Executive Director, **Amber Martin**, Centre for Youth Care Mentor/ former Beacon Cove resident, and **Kyle Oakley** who spoke of their lived experience with homelessness

What Gives Us

HOPE





WHAT'S WORKING

- Trauma-informed practice
- Strong school partnerships
- Supportive transitional housing models
- Programs focused on access to education, employment, and mental health care
- Youth hubs & outreach services
- Shared responsibility & collaboration
- Developing natural supports
- Youth-serving agency collaboration

WHAT'S NOT WORKING



- Youth falling through predictable cracks at age 19
- Waiting for youth to experience homelessness to qualify for supports instead of focusing on prevention
- Inconsistent definitions of youth
- Long waits for mental health services
- Confidentiality systems preventing collaborative solutions
- Lack of youth-specific housing
- Poor transitions between support systems
- Rigid eligibility criteria for opportunities

What Needs to Change

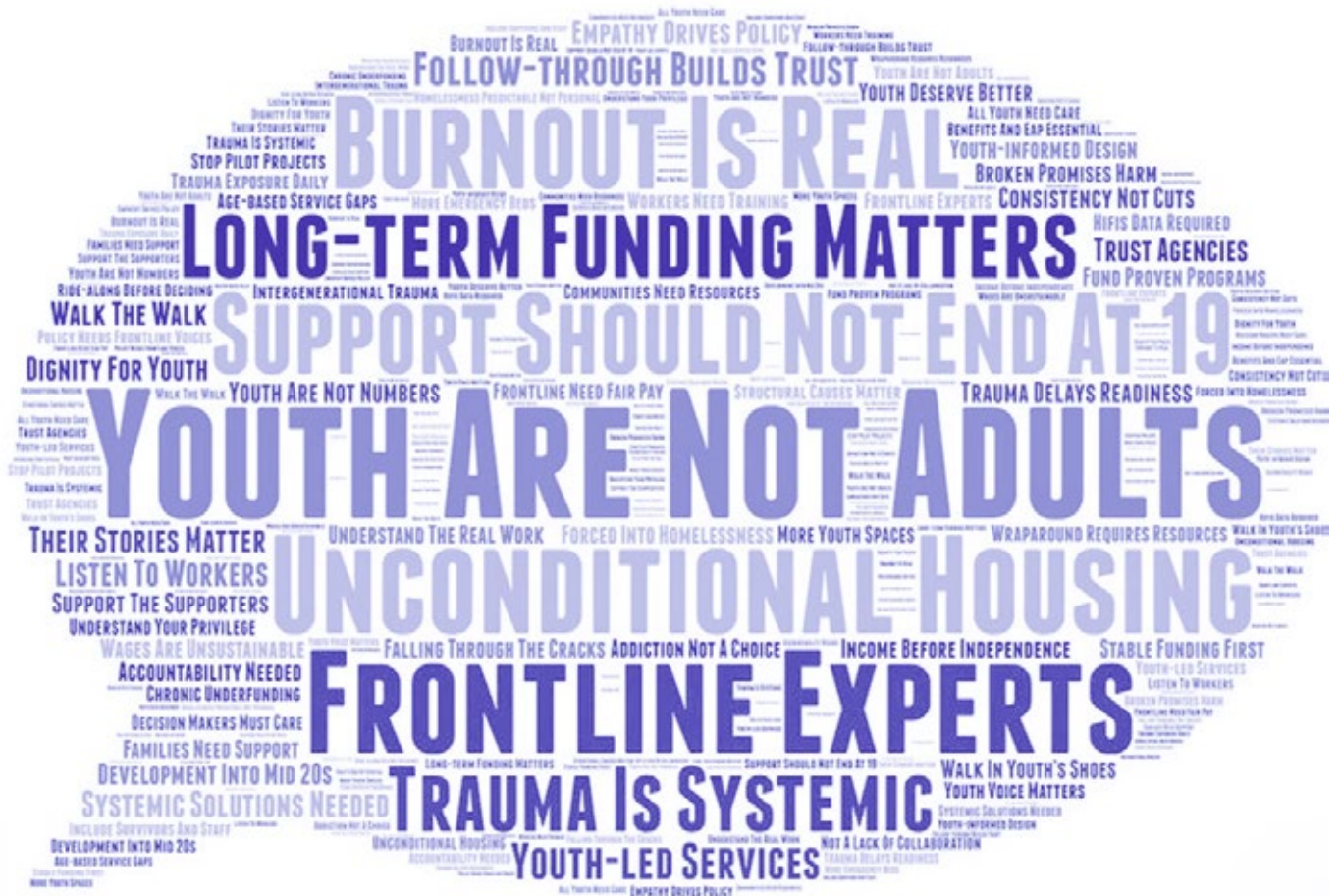
To create a coordinated provincial response, participants recommended system-level reforms including a universal consent form, more flexible policies, extending supports to age 25 for all youth programs, increasing youth housing options and rent supports, multi-year program funding, improving access to trauma-informed mental health care, and making navigation easier with youth-centered hubs.



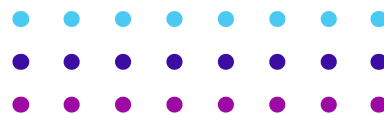
“

We are not babysitting potential. We should be preparing them for lift-off.

What Decision Makers Need to Know



Good enough does
not change lives.”



What Can You do to Help End Youth homelessness in NB?

Call to Action for Government

(GNB, Municipalities, Provincial Departments, Social Workers)

Systematic Changes to Improve System Coordination & Accountability

- Develop a universal consent form for agencies and government systems to support safe information sharing, while being flexible to enable care and safety.
- Strengthen accountability and transparency by clarifying responsibilities, ensuring the right people are informed during key moments like youth discharges, and regularly engaging with frontline workers, youth, and communities.
- Reduce barriers by removing overly rigid eligibility criteria, allowing staff to apply policies with flexibility, and building on successful models such as the LINK program.
- Increase stability by providing stable multi-year funding to effective programs, especially those focused on prevention and diversion that meets all basic needs (therapy, transportation, clothing, school supplies).
- Invest in youth-specific housing, emergency beds, supported transitional units, and youth-specific rent subsidies.
- Expand trauma-informed mental health supports, improve access to diagnoses and treatment, and strengthen wraparound services for youth using substances by ending program exclusions.

Fix Transitions & Extend Supports

- Standardize the definition of “youth” across systems and extend supports beyond age 19 (participants suggested up to 25).
- Prevent discharges into homelessness by starting transition planning earlier and ensuring coordinated, proactive supports.
- Improve transitions between youth and adult systems, including tailored support for youth with developmental disabilities and consistent aftercare



Why are our systems focused on what we have to offer and eligibility requirements instead of what youth need?”

Call to Action for Nonprofit Leaders

(Executive Directors, Program Leads, Researchers)

Strengthen Collaboration & Specialized Staff Training

- Strengthen sector collaboration by meeting regularly with other agencies, maintaining clear expectations and follow-ups, and sharing resources, updates, and success stories.
- Advance trauma-informed practice through ongoing training and by providing staff with tools for early identification and early intervention.
- Support staff wellbeing by recognizing and addressing vicarious trauma and burnout.

Improve Service Navigation & Expand Youth-Specific Supports

- Improve service navigation and consistency by maintaining regional resource lists, providing warm hand-offs, and ensuring youth receive the same information across geographic zones.
- Expand flexible, youth-driven supports through more light-touch programs, youth hubs, and drop-in models that meet young people where they are.
- Increase stable, youth-appropriate housing options by creating more independent living models with nearby supports and strengthening aftercare and follow-up services.



“

Every youth needs a person they can trust and a roadmap they're not forced to follow.”



Call to Action for Frontline Workers

(Child & Youth Care Workers, Outreach, Shelters, Navigators)

Build Strong Relationships & Youth Voice

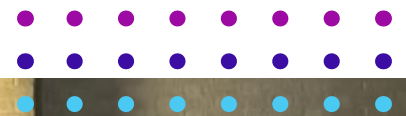
- **Center youth voice** and choice by listening closely, asking what they need, and involving them in planning and decisions.
- **Use a trauma-informed lens** by considering each youth's past experiences and what approaches will work best for them.
- **Build trusting, non-judgmental relationships** through open, consistent communication.

Improve Early Intervention & Collaboration Across Systems

- **Act early** by identifying emerging risks and immediately connecting youth with mentors and natural supports.
- **Coordinate proactively** by maintaining consistent communication with partners and actively participating in case conferences and multi-agency planning.
- **Ensure smooth transitions** by closing service gaps and advocating strongly when system rules create barriers for youth.

Maintain Trauma-Informed, Low-Barrier Services

- **Meet youth where they are** (outreach, flexible hours).
- **Provide stability** and consistency even during system changes.



Failure is proof that courage exists.”



Call to Action for Schools & Educators

Expand Early Intervention & Strengthen Partnerships With Community Agencies

- **Act early** by identifying student challenges quickly, engaging guidance counsellors, and making proactive referrals to appropriate supports.
- **Individualize support** through care plans that address special needs and remove barriers for older youth often labeled with “behaviour issues.”
- **Strengthen partnerships** by maintaining consistent communication with youth-serving organizations and building on effective collaboration models (e.g., Hillcrest, Compass, NBCC).

Support Education Stability

- **Connect youth** to GED, alternative education, and flexible learning pathways.
- **Increase access** to programs that help with homework, technology, and school re-engagement.



Youth need to
feel loved
and valued”.



Call to Action for Police, Justice, & Corrections

Improve Transitions Out of Justice Settings

- **Ensure discharge planning** includes housing, supports, and warm hand-offs.
- **Prevent youth** from leaving corrections without a plan.

Strengthen Trauma-Informed Approaches & Reduce Criminalization

- **Deepen trauma-informed practice** by increasing understanding of mental health, neurodivergence, and the unique needs of missing youth, including those in care.
- **Prioritize diversion over criminalization** by strengthening collaboration with community agencies and expanding positive liaison roles like RCMP–Youth Impact partnerships.
- **Improve coordinated crisis response** by working closely with schools and nonprofits to provide early intervention and timely support.

Call to Action for Healthcare Providers

Expand Access & Reduce Gaps to Provide Trauma-Informed, Youth-Friendly Care

- **Expand timely, youth-friendly access** by reducing wait times, offering earlier assessments, and providing flexible, low-barrier appointment options (e.g., onsite counselling, outreach nurses).
- **Strengthen coordinated care** by collaborating closely with nonprofits to ensure consistent follow-up and support mobile and outreach models that meet youth where they are.
- **Advance trauma-informed, stigma-free practice** by reducing stigma toward youth who use substances and ensuring care is grounded in understanding and compassion





Call to Action for Funders & Philanthropists

Invest in Youth Housing & Prevention

- **Fund youth-specific housing**, emergency beds, and transitional units.
- **Broaden parameters of support** for frontline staff to respond directly to needs e.g. rent supplements, damage deposits, and eviction prevention.

Fund Wraparound Supports & Basic Needs

- **Increase youth stability** by funding programs that provide basic needs (therapy, transportation, clothing, school supplies, employment materials) and reduce crisis.
- **Invest in prevention** through multi-year commitments that support early intervention and long-term outcomes.
- **Expand integrated supports** by funding youth hubs, cross agency platforms, and coordinated service models.

Call to Action for the Community

Increase Awareness of Youth Homelessness

- **Reduce stigma and raise awareness** by sharing stories, participating in public education on youth homelessness, and recognizing that prevention is a shared community responsibility.
- **Advocate and mobilize support** by championing youth housing and rights, donating to youth-serving organizations, and celebrating community wins and youth-driven initiatives.
- **Engage directly with youth** through mentorship, volunteering, transportation support, and other hands-on contributions that strengthen connection and stability.

Appendices

Examples of Programs and Strategies that Work:

- 19 and Plus 26 Program
- Anti-Exploitation
- Beacon Cove
- Case Managers through Teen Resource Center & Centre for Youth Care
- Child and Youth Team
- Child and Youth Well-Being Act (extended to age 26)
- Child and Youth in Care Scholarships (LINK)
- Codiac RCMP Intervention Officer
- Compass (school program)
- Counseling and Therapy Partnerships
- Drop-In Programs
- Employment Partnerships (employers willing to hire youth)
- Enterprise Program
- FACE – Family and Child Education (Parenting Programming for Dads)
- Family Group Conference (FGCs) – returning soon
- First Steps
- Food Bank
- GED Program (Learning Exchange)
- Hillcrest / Compass (education)
- Housing First for Youth
- Housing Programs for Youth
- Integrated Services Hub (IYS)
- John Howard (programming/support)
- Jumpstart Program
- KV Oasis Youth Diversion Program
- Launch (for female and female-identifying youth)
- Learning Disabilities Association of New Brunswick
- Learning Exchange Programs (WESLinks, GOALS, LEAP, incentives, etc.)
- Mobility for Good
- Mockingbird Program
- Moncton YouthQuest (ages 16–24)
- Nurse Practitioners – clinic collaboration
- Oasis in Quispamsis
- Outreach Programs
- Peer Programs
- Portage (addictions program)
- Quest Case Management
- Ready Program
- Regional Programs (not specified by name)
- Rentals / Rental Supplements / Rent Subsidies
- Saint John Learning Exchange

Appendices

Examples of Programs and Strategies that Work:

- Saint John Youth Hub
- Regional Programs
- Rentals / Rental Supplements / Rent Subsidies
- Saint John Learning Exchange
- Salvus Bus (mobile health clinic)
- Schools-based supports
- Jade Centre (formerly Southeast Sexual Assault Centre)
- Shelters (youth and adult)
- Student Lawyers (on-site visits)
- Teen Resource Center (TRC)
- Transitional/ Supportive Housing (Beacon Cove, Mitchener Village, etc.)
- Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) training & practice
- U-Turn Program (Moncton)
- United Way (services, collaboration)
- Violence Threat Risk Assessment
- (VTRA) Team
- Wellness Mobile Clinic (on wheels)
- WESLinks (Learning Exchange)
- YMCA (youth programs, recreation, connection)
- Youth and Child Advocate (Office)
- Youth Engagement/Young Adult Services (combined model)
- Youth Impact
- Youth Quest (one-stop shop, Moncton & other regions)
- Youth Transitional Housing
- Youth Voice / Youth Council / Youth Engagement Programs
- “YES Program” / YEYAS (Youth Engagement Services)
- 2-on-1 Connector Service