

# City of Thompson

## Youth Homelessness/ Housing Instability

### Count 2016



**Marleny M. Bonnycastle & Maureen Simpkins**



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

**Canada**

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Our work on homelessness has focused on using a Community Based Participatory Research approach. Homelessness became an important area of interest for our teaching and research as well as for collaborative and community engagement initiatives. As professors working with northern Manitoban students, our major concern was to increase the capacity of our students to develop research that will address social issues in the north and work with local communities and organizations. We have used a variety of community engagement and research approaches such as community cafes and photovoice (Bonnycastle & Bonnycastle, 2015; Bonnycastle & Simpkins, 2017).

Our interest in homelessness in Thompson was supported by the City of Thompson and agencies who were working on strategies to address homelessness and housing instability in Thompson. We were funded through The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) to conduct a photovoice project with a group of homeless people living at the Thompson homeless shelter as well as at a transitional facility at 95 Cree Road and Phoenix House (MAPS) (Bonnycastle, Simpkins & Siddle, 2016). In 2015, The Community Advisory Board on Homelessness in Thompson asked the University of Manitoba and the University College of the North to coordinate the first Thompson Point in Time Homeless count and we were part of the coordination team. The Federal government and the City of Thompson provided the funding for this project and for the first-time Thompson has statistics about homelessness. In 2016, we were also involved in the coordination of the National PiT Count here in Thompson.

By 2015 we were awarded funding to study youth homelessness in northern Manitoba by the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, the University College of the North and CCPA. This report represents the findings from the Thompson Youth Count done in May 2016. The Youth Count is one of several components of the Youth Homelessness project. We will also be involved in the development of a Community Action Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Thompson.

## YOUTH COUNT TEAM

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Dr. Marleny Bonnycastle	Researcher
Dr. Maureen Simpkins	Researcher
Lydia Blais - Community Member	Youth Count Coordinator
Janet Tait - Student	Research Assistant
Tina McKay - Student	Research Assistant

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

Between May 11 and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016,

- 69 female, male, transgender, and LGBTQ youth between the ages of 16-29 were surveyed in Thompson
- There were more females (57%) than males (38%) who identified that they were experiencing homelessness or housing instability.
- Average age of youth surveyed was 22.3 years old.
- 85% identified as Indigenous.
- 47% of youth come from communities outside of Thompson.
- 46% said that they were either in foster care or had been involved with foster care.
- 52% said that they had been involved with the criminal justice system.
- 50% of Indigenous and Metis youth did not have a stable place to stay on a regular basis.
- 87% said that housing instability was an issue for youth in Thompson.



Figure 1 – “No place to go” - picture take by a youth participant

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# Acknowledgements

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The research team wishes to thank the funders of this project and numerous participants including youth, service providers, community members and students from the University of Manitoba, Northern Social Work Program and the University College of the North.

A locally-based group of representatives from the diverse organizations working with youth, Aboriginal organizations, government, NGOs and academia participated in the design and data collection of the youth count and provided valuable perspectives and input for this research.

We are immensely grateful to youth who participated in different community cafes, photovoice, interviews, surveys and workshops for their thoughtful participation and engagement. This research report reflects their expression of interest and the needs and gaps for youth.

A special acknowledgement goes to Elder Jack Robinson who has always been a valuable part of the research team; he brings his wisdom and personal experience. Much appreciation goes to Janet Tait and Tina McKay, the research assistants for this project for their enormous support and dedication. Thanks also to Lydia Blais, the Coordinator of the Youth Count for her wisdom and dedication to engaging youth and community participants.

Finally, we want to acknowledge the support of our two universities when conducting this collaborative research: The University of Manitoba Northern Social Work Program and the University College of the North, Faculty of Arts, Business and Science. In particular, we want to thank Professor Colin Bonnycastle for his companionship and support during the development of the PiT Count as well as the revision of this report. We also thank the Research Ethics Boards (REBs) from both universities for reviewing and approving the ethics applications in a timely manner, which allowed us to undertake the Youth count within a tight schedule.

# YOUTH HOMELESSNESS...

## ...is a major issue across Canada

### 1. INTRODUCTION

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Stephen Gaetz (2014) defines,

Youth homelessness as a sub-population of those who are homeless and most often refers to young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers. Importantly, many youth who are homeless lack the essential social supports deemed necessary for the transition from childhood to adulthood. Youth who are homeless do not have a stable or consistent residence or source of income, nor do they necessarily have adequate access to the support networks necessary to foster a safe and nurturing transition into the responsibilities of adulthood. (p.13)

In 2016, the *Without a Home* study was conducted nationally to study young people who experience homelessness. With 1,103 respondents from 47 different communities across 10 provinces and territories, this study's sample size enabled them to conduct a detailed analysis and to draw important conclusions.

Also in 2016, the University of Manitoba and the University College of the North with the support of the city of Thompson conducted its first Youth Count on the issue of housing instability and homelessness. As a first Youth Count we adapted and used a modified Gaetz (2014) definition of youth homelessness and we developed a survey which was intentionally kept short to encourage participation. The major modification was changing the age range and adapting the definition of youth used by local and Indigenous organizations working with youth in Thompson. The agencies and organizations who helped us determine age criteria as well as the survey questions were:

- Aboriginal Health Services – Northern Health Region
- Keewatin Tribal Council – Youth Wellness and Education.
- Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre
- Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakan Inc
- McDonald Youth Services,
- Pride North of 55
- Probation services,
- R.C.M.P.
- R.D. Parker High School, (Aboriginal Youth Council)
- Thompson Boys and Girls Club
- YARN (Youth at Risk Network),



The main reason for initiating a Youth Count was to begin to gather some base-line knowledge about youth homelessness in northern Manitoba and to pose questions such as:

- Who are the youth experiencing housing instability and homelessness?
- What are their pathways to homelessness?
- What are their experiences of homelessness and what do they see as positive solutions to begin to alleviate youth homelessness?

When working with groups of homeless adults in the city of Thompson between 2012-2015, Drs. Bonnycastle and Simpkins were told stories on a number of occasions about the need to specifically address youth homelessness. Youth homelessness is typically not an issue that is obvious to the public. Youth often don't want to be seen and often don't use the homeless shelter services. Youth tend to "couch-surf" and move around staying with friends or family until they need to look for a new place to stay. We were also told that many youth experiencing housing instability had "aged out of care". Once they had gone through the child welfare system and turned 18, they were on their own. In Thompson there is no transitional facility for youth in this position. The statistics from the 2016 Thompson Youth count reinforce that both those issues are a reality in Thompson.

The Thompson Youth Count is part of a larger project on "Youth Homelessness: Including the voices of youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in northern Manitoba".

The Youth Count was carried out between May 11<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016. 69 surveys were completed by youth between the ages of 15 – 29. Participants include female, male, transgender and LGBTQ youth.

## 2. SUMMARY

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This study represents a first step to begin to answer questions like “Who are the youth in Thompson experiencing homelessness and housing instability”; “What are the pathways and the causes of youth homelessness?”; “What changes would youth like to see in Thompson to support youth and their families?”

When looking at the demographics of youth and homelessness in Thompson, it is not surprising that 85% of youth who participated in this study identified as Indigenous. Half or 51% of Aboriginal people in Manitoba were under the age of 25 (in 2011) compared with 30% of the non-Aboriginal population. Also, the youngest First Nations populations live in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, where the median age was 20 and 21 respectively. This is half of the median age (41 years) from the non-Aboriginal population in both provinces (Statistics Canada 2011).

In terms of gender and homelessness, 57% of the participants who have experienced homelessness identified as Indigenous females. This may be surprising to some as we tend to think of homeless youth as being male.

The average age for youth who had experienced homelessness for the first time was 18 years old. The two most common ages when becoming homeless were 18 and 21 years old. This would coincide with youth who are “aging out of care” from the foster care system which is a significant issue in the north.

It is also not surprising that many youths moved from other northern communities to Thompson at some point. As Thompson is known to be a hub for northern medical and educational services as well for employment, there is much back and forth mobility. The highest number of youth had moved from the nearby communities of Cross Lake and Nelson House, but also come from a variety of northern communities.

Some significant characteristics of youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability were: 74% were not attending school; 46% had been involved with the foster care system; 62% were not working; 52% had been involved in the criminal justice system.

87% of the youth surveyed stated that homelessness and housing instability is an issue in Thompson. As well 71% stated that they are currently at risk of becoming homeless. What became evident during this study is that youth housing instability and homelessness is often invisible to much of the community. Youth experiencing housing instability are constantly moving around, “couch surfing” staying with friends and family for periods of time.

The main cause of homelessness and housing instability for participants was a “dysfunctional family life” and “lack of housing”. It is important though to see that most causes are intricately connected. Other causes cited by participants were involvement with the criminal justice system; poverty; parental addictions; aging out of care; lack of activities for youth; intergenerational trauma; parents are homeless; mental health issues; racism; physical health; sexual identity; high rent; alcoholism; co-signer issues when renting. Many of these causes relate to providing support to parents who may be experiencing mental health issues, poverty and addictions, so they can in turn support their children. “Aging out of care” was also a significant issue. When youth in the foster care system reach the age of 18 they are no longer part of the system. They then must find a place to stay and learn how to support themselves with very little outside support. In 2011, of all Manitoba children in foster care, 85% were Aboriginal children, most whom (82%) were First Nations children (Statistics Canada 2011).

Perhaps some of the most valuable feedback received from these youth participants are the changes that they would like to see in Thompson to support youth and their families. The focus of this project has been to include the voices of youth in any discussion about homelessness and housing instability. Providing housing for youth was the first priority, then the creation of a youth centre and shelter, then job training for youth. These are all very concrete examples of ways to support youth.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

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The Youth Homelessness project: Including the voices of youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in northern Manitoba, was developed in three phases. In phase 1, we conducted a community café, focus groups as well as a “HipHop” youth event involving different youth groups to generate dialogue. This helped to build relationships and trust and to gather data about their lived experiences of homelessness, the factors that put them at risk of homelessness, and identified needs and supports for youth.

Phase 2 was the Youth Count which was conducted between May 11 – 19, 2016. The Youth Count greatly contributed to the information gathered in phase 1. Phase 3 will be focused on the development of a collaborative community action plan for youth who are homeless or experiencing housing instability including Thompson and the surrounding communities.

Our approach throughout the project has been to use participatory community-based research methods. This means that we worked as co-researchers in collaboration with community groups and youth to generate ideas and approaches that will address community needs as they relate to youth homelessness (Castleden et al. 2008).

Information posters were distributed to local youth organizations. (Recruitment posters Appendix A) Researchers and Research Assistants conducted information sessions about the Youth Count with key organizations such as the Mystery Lake School Board, R.D. Parker High School, the Boys and Girls Club and other groups that wanted to participate. Representatives of partner groups working with youth recruited participants and arranged a time for groups of youths (over the age of 16) to complete the survey (Youth Survey Appendix B).

The participants were recruited through the project partners who work directly with youth:

- Boys and Girls Club of Thompson
- Keewatin Tribal Council – Youth Wellness and Education.
- Ma-Mow-We-Tak Friendship Centre
- Manitoba Government
- Macdonald Youth Services
- Northern Health Region – Aboriginal Health Services
- Pride North of 55
- R.D. Parker High School – Youth Aboriginal Council
- Thompson Youth Build
- Futures program (alternative high school for youth at risk)
- Marymound North Youth Services
- MKO
- Probation Services

Participants age 16 – 29 can give consent themselves, while anyone under the age of 16 wanting to participate was only counted and not surveyed. (Tally sheet Appendix C; Verbal Consent Form Appendix D)

As with this report, the final report of this project will not contain the names of the participants. All raw data and transcriptions will be destroyed five years after the completion of data collection. They will be destroyed in August 2022.

During the final phase of the project we will collaborate with community groups to develop a Community Action Plan to End Youth Homelessness. Youth will also be invited to participate.

## Limitations

This is the first time that Thompson has had a youth count developed in a collaborative way. We learned a number of lessons that will help to improve this work in future youth counts. Some of these lessons include:

- Strengthening the promotion and recruitment of the youth count to engage agencies and the public in completing the survey.
- Increasing efforts to include as many youths as possible to become involved in the design of the survey as well as in the data collection.
- Developing strategies that strengthen the commitment and participation of local agencies to apply the survey with the youth that they work with.
- Assuring the quality and integrity of the data by planning the count in a way that surveys are completed with the help of volunteers or staff.
- Coordinating with the School District and School Board to include youth who are attending school who are experiencing housing instability or homelessness.

## 4. DEMOGRAPHICS

### Gender Identity

The graph and table below shows the gender distribution of the 69 youth who completed the youth count survey about homelessness and housing instability. The highest percentage, 57% were female youth, then 38% were male and 6% were either transgender or preferred not to state their gender identity, or left the question blank. This data shows that for every 2 male youth participants surveyed there were 3 female youth who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

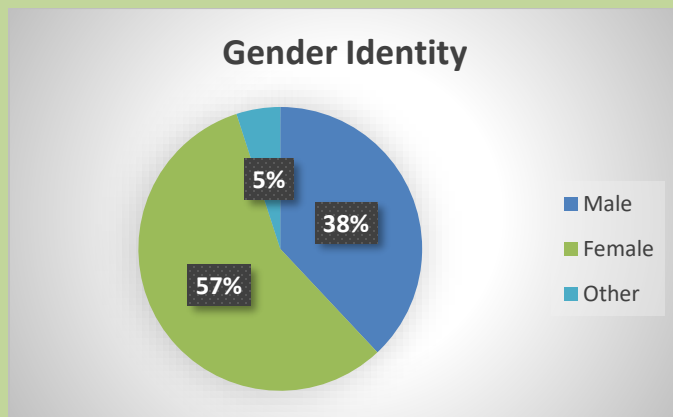


Figure 2 - Gender identity

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	26	38
Female	39	57
Transgender	1	1
Rather not say	2	3
Missing data	1	1
Total	69	100.0

### Age

The age range of youth who completed the youth survey were between 16-30 years old. The average age was 22.3 years old and the most common age was 19 years old, which represented 14% of the total participants. The graph and table below shows the distribution of age groups. The highest group of homeless or youth experiencing housing instability were those under 20 years of age at 39%. A cumulative percentage of 68% of all participants were between 16-24 years old.

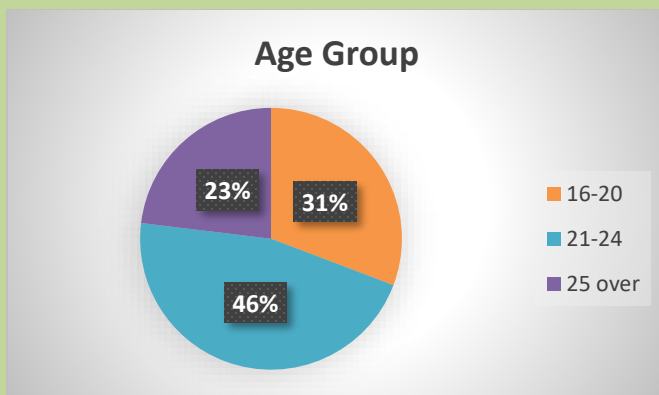


Figure 3 - Age Group

Age Group	#	%	Cumulative Percentage
16-20	27	39.0	39.0
21-24	20	29.0	68.0
25 over	22	32.0	100.0
Total	69	100.0	

### Gender Identity and Age Groups

The graph and table below shows that male youth were the highest percentage of homeless or those experiencing housing instability in the group of 21-24-year-old, whereas female youth are highest in both the 17-20 and 25-and over year-old age range. Transgender and “prefer not to say” are in the 24 or younger years old groups.

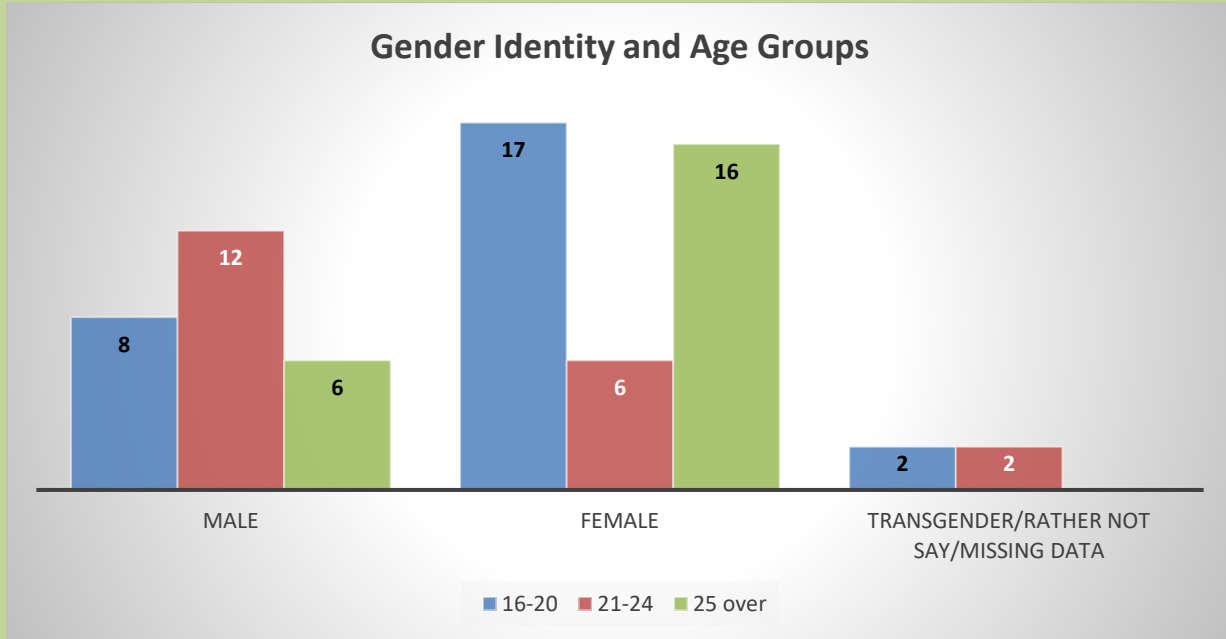


Figure 4 - Gender Identity and Age Group

		Gender Identity				Missing data	Total	
		Male	Female	Transgender	Rather not say		#	%
	17-20	8	17	-	1	1	27	39
	21-24	12	6	1	1	-	20	29
	25 over	6	16	-	-	-	22	32
Total	#	<b>26</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>69</b>	
	%	<b>38</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>100.0</b>

## Age of first time Homelessness

The graph shows the age range of the 46 participants who answered this question. The two most common ages when becoming homeless were 18 and 21 years old at 15% each.

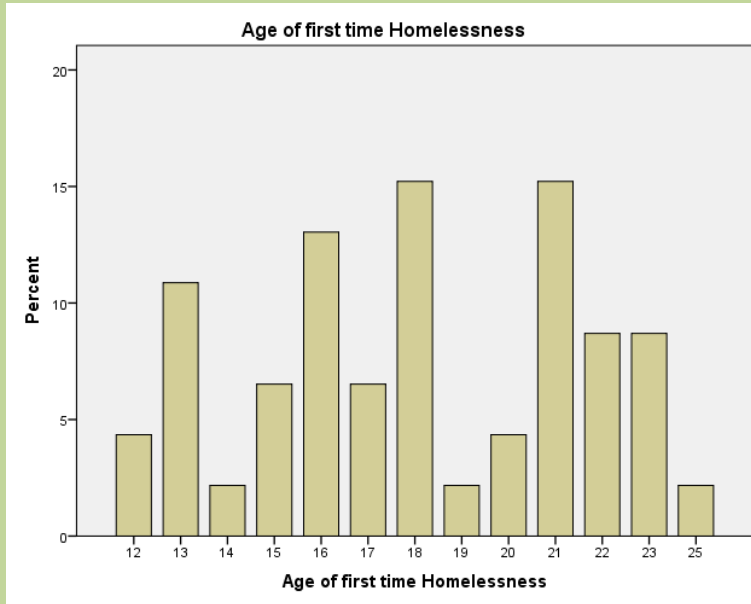


Figure 5 - Age at first time homeless or housing instability

## Gender & Age of first time homelessness

A total of 45 participants answered the question about when they first became homeless. Of these, the highest number were female youth at 18 years old.

Age	Male	Female	Rather not say	Total
12	1	1	0	2
13	1	3	1	5
14	0	1	0	1
15	1	1	0	2
16	1	4	1	6
17	3	0	0	3
18	0	7	0	7
19	0	1	0	1
20	2	0	0	2
21	3	4	0	7
22	1	3	0	4
23	1	3	0	4
25	1	0	0	1
Total	15	28	2	45



### Gender Identity and Ethnic Groups

The following shows that 85% of the surveyed participants were Indigenous and 12% identified as Metis and only 3% were non-Indigenous youth. Figure 6 shows that female Indigenous youth were the highest number (34), which represents 57% of youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability.

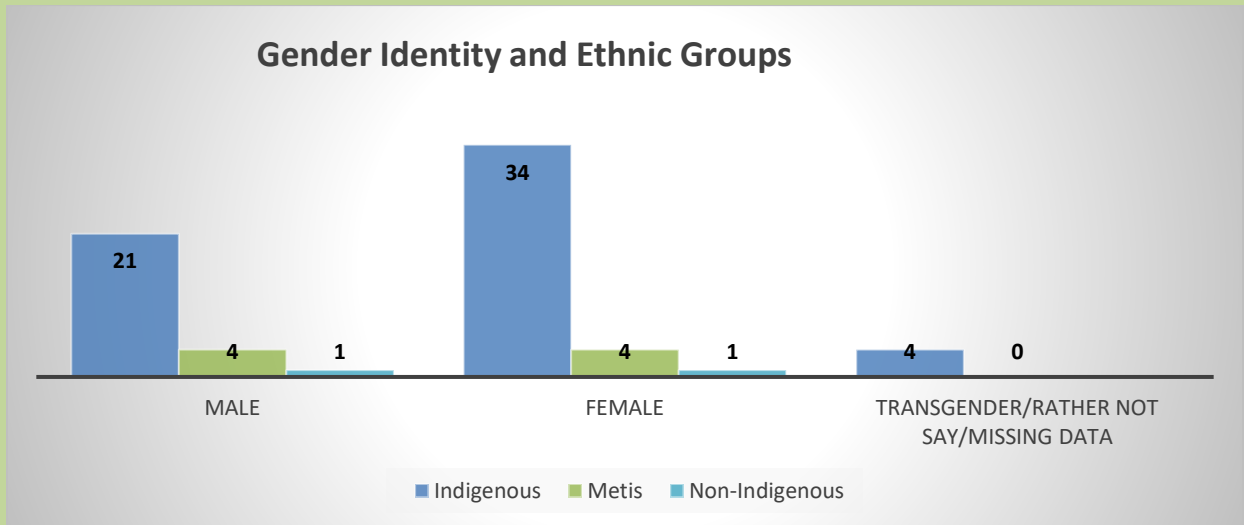


Figure 6 - Gender Identity and Ethnic Group

		Male	Female	Transgen der	Rather not say	Missing data	TOTAL	
							N	%
Indigenous		21	34	1	2	1	59	85
Metis		4	4	0	0	0	8	12
Non-Indigenous		1	1	0	0	0	2	3
TOTAL	N	26	39	1	2	1	69	-
	%	38	57	1	3	1	-	100

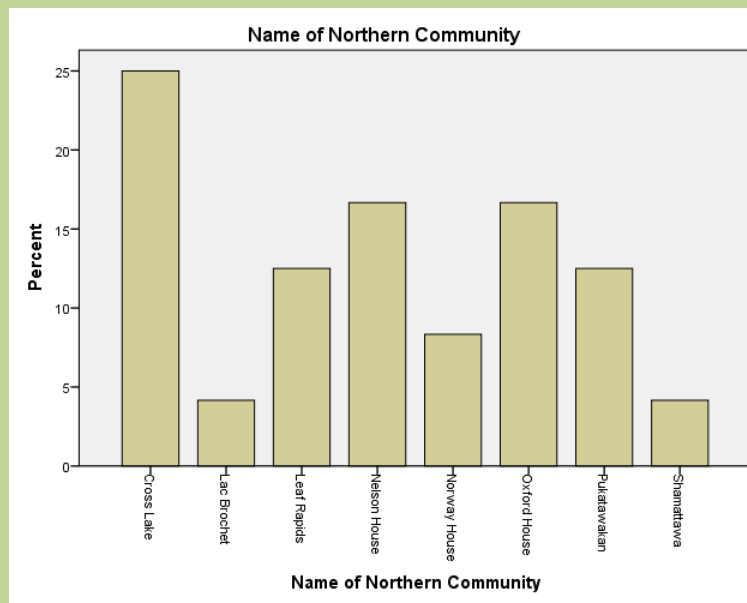
## 5. THOMPSON AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES

### Move from communities to Thompson

Participants were asked if they had moved to Thompson in the last year from another community, province or country. About half of the participants stated that they had moved to Thompson from another northern community in Manitoba or Saskatchewan.

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	46.4
No	29	42.0
Don't know	1	1.4
Total	62	89.9
Missing data	7	10.1
Total	69	100

### Communities where youth lived before moving to Thompson



	Frequency	%
Cross Lake	6	8.7
Lac Brochet	1	1.4
Leaf Rapids	3	4.3
Nelson House	4	5.6
Norway House	2	2.8
Oxford House	4	5.8
Pukatawakgan	3	4.3
Shamattawa	1	1.4
Total answers	24	34.8
Missing data	45	65.2
Total	69	100

Figure 7 - Communities where youth lived before moving to Thompson

Other provinces and Communities:

- Two youth moved from Saskatchewan, no reported youth from other provinces.
- Swan River, MB
- Wollaston Lake, SK

## Gender and move to Thompson

	Male	Female	Transgender	Rather not say	Total	Percentage
Yes	14	17	0	1	32	46.4
No	11	16	1	1	29	42.0
Don't know	0	1	0	0	1	1.4
Total	25	34	1	2	62	89.9
Missing data					7	10.1
Percentage	36.2	49.3	1.4	2.8	10.2	100

Youth who experienced homelessness or housing instability moved to Thompson for a variety of reasons (in their own words):

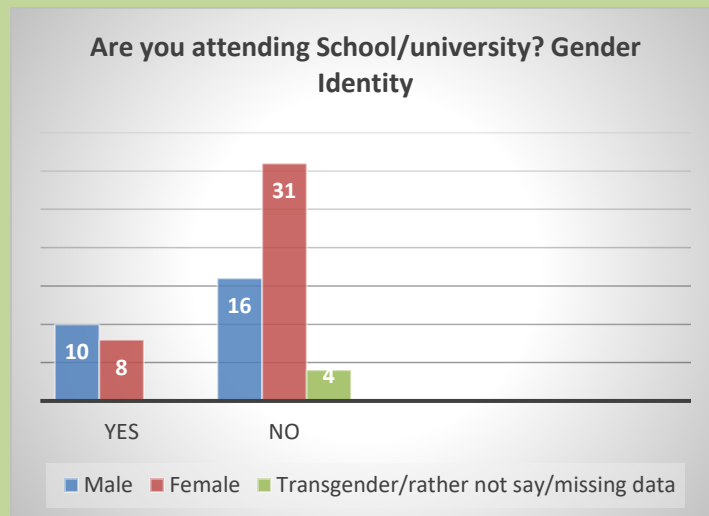
- Because Winnipeg was too bad
- BCR (Band Council Resolution)
- Choose to
- Domestic Violence: had to leave a domestic relationship, moved to Cross Lake for 2 months, came back left abusive boyfriend
- Family matters, I was basically chased away by them
- For the program I am taking at youth build/Boys & Girls club
- For work, school
- Housing issues, there was no home for me and my children. I came to find housing, turned 18/family said no room
- Oxford house, 3 years homeless, jail, been living in homeless shelter for 5 years, released from jail
- Relocated
- To live and stay alive, to reside in Thompson

## 6. PATHWAYS TO HOMELESSNESS/ HOUSING INSTABILITY

### EDUCATION

#### Gender Identity & Attending Schools

A high percentage (74%) of participants were not attending schools and most of these were female youth, (45%). None of the transgender or “preferred not to say” participants were attending school. Most of youth (76.3%) who were experiencing homelessness and not attending school were Indigenous.



	Yes	No	Total
Male	10	16	26
Female	8	31	39
Transgender	0	1	1
Rather not say	0	2	2
Missing data		1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	N	18	51
	%	26	74

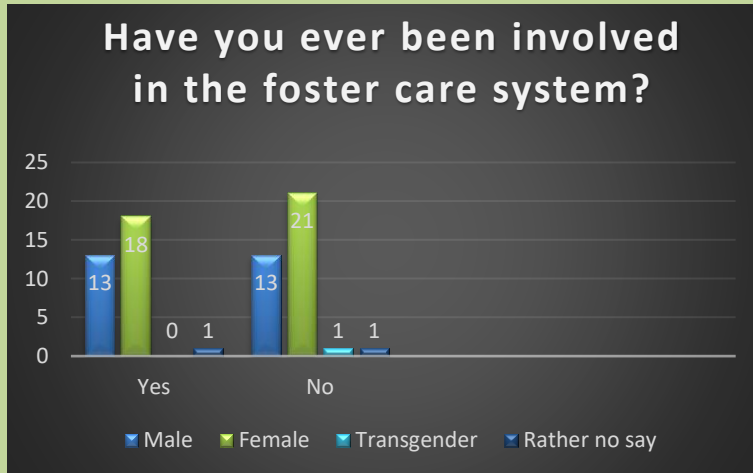
Figure 8 - Gender Identity and Attending Schools

		Ethnicity			Total
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	
Education	Yes	14	3	1	18
	No	45	5	1	51
Total		59	8	2	69

## FOSTER CARE

### Experience with Foster Care and Gender Identity

Participants were asked: Have you ever been involved in the foster care system? Figure 9 shows that nearly half, 46% of participants were involved with the foster care system of which 56% were female youth and 81% of them were 24 years old or younger. Of those youth who reported having experience with the foster care system 97% were identified as homeless or experiencing housing instability. In addition, nearly half of homeless/housing instability youth who had experienced foster care were Indigenous.



	Yes	No	Total
Male	13	13	26
Female	18	21	39
Transgender	0	1	1
Rather not say	1	1	2
Missing data		1	1
Total	N	32	37
	%	46	54
			100.0

Figure 9 - Experience with foster care and gender identity

		TOTAL			
		17-20	21-24	25 over	Total
Foster Care	Yes	14	12	7	33
	No	13	8	15	36
Total		27	20	22	69
% foster care		52	60	32	48

		Foster Care		Total
		Yes	No	
Ethnicity	Indigenous	29	30	59
	Metis	3	5	8
	Non-Aboriginal	1	1	2
Total		33	36	69

## EMPLOYMENT

### Employment and Gender Identity

We also wanted to know the employment conditions of homeless youth or those experiencing housing instability. We asked if they were employed in any way. Figure 10 shows that two thirds or 62% of the youth experiencing homelessness or housing instability were not working. Close to three quarters or 72% of the unemployed youth were female while 66% of unemployed youth were Indigenous. 58% of homeless or those experiencing housing instability were neither attending school nor working.



	Yes	No	Total
Male	17	9	26
Female	8	31	39
Transgender	0	1	1
Rather not say	1	1	2
Missing data		1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	N	26	43
	%	37.7	62
			100.0

Figure 10 - Employment and Gender Identity

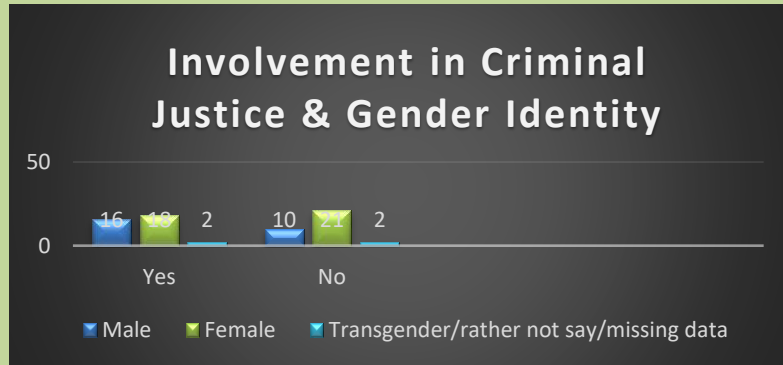
		Ethnicity			Total
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	
Employment	Yes	20	5	1	26
	No	39	3	1	43
Total		59	8	2	69

		Education		Total
		Yes	No	
Employment	Yes	15	11	26
	No	3	40	43
Total		18	51	69

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

### Involvement in Criminal Justice System (CJS) and Gender Identity

The youth survey also asked if participants had ever been involved in the criminal justice system. Figure 11 shows that more than half (52%) of participants had been involved at some time with the law. Similar findings are found in each of the ethnic categories. Youth 24 and younger represented 67% of the youth involved with the criminal justice system. 78% of youth involved with the criminal justice system were not attending school. 30% of youth were involved with both the foster care and the criminal justice systems.



	Yes	No	TOTAL
Male	16	10	26
Female	18	21	39
Transgender	0	1	1
Rather not say	1	1	2
Missing data	1	0	1
TOTAL	N	36	33
	%	52	48
			100.0

Figure 11 - Involvement with the Criminal Justice System and Gender Identity

		Age Group			
		17-20	21-24	25 over	Total
Involvement w/CJS	Yes	15	9	12	36
	No	12	11	10	33
Total		27	20	22	69
% involved criminal justice		56	45.0	54.5	52.2

		Ethnicity			
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	Total
Involvement w/CJS	Yes	32	3	1	36
	No	27	5	1	33
Total		59	8	2	6

		Education		Total
		Yes	No	
Involvement w/CJS	Yes	8	28	36
	No	10	23	33
Total		18	51	69

		Foster Care		Total
		Yes	No	
Involvement w/CJS	Yes	21	15	36
	No	12	21	33
Total		33	36	69

## 7. LIVING WITH HOUSING INSTABILITY

### The Issue of Homelessness, Housing Instability and Gender Identity

Participants were asked if they think that homelessness or housing instability is an issue for youth in Thompson. Figure 12 shows that most of the participants, 87% affirmed that homelessness and housing instability is an issue. 85% of the female responded 'Yes' to this question.

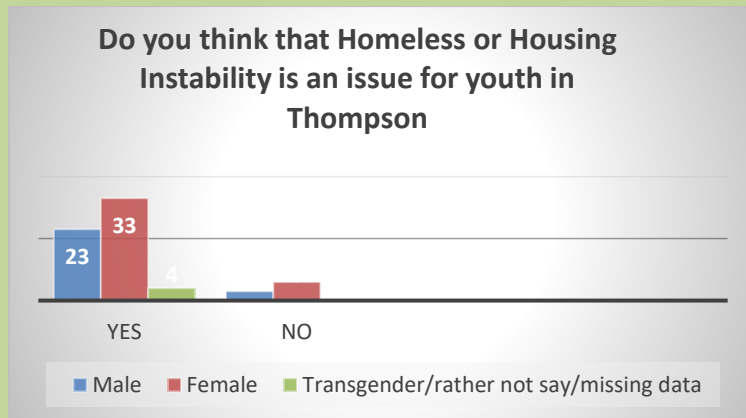


Figure 12 - Issues of Homeless and Housing Instability and Gender Identity

	Yes	No	Total	
Male	23	3	26	
Female	33	6	39	
Transgender	1	0	1	
Rather not say	2	0	2	
Missing data	1		1	
TOTAL	N	60	9	69
	%	87%	13%	100.0

### Current Stable Place to Stay and Gender Identity

Participants were asked if they currently have a stable place to stay. Figure 13 shows that 51% of participants had no stable place to stay. Female youth counted for 60% of those who did not have a stable place to stay. Some stable places that participants stayed were with their dad, friends, mom, aunt, 95 Cree Road. 71% of youth who do not have a stable place to sleep were under 24 years of age. Nearly 50% of Indigenous and Metis participants did not have a stable place to stay.

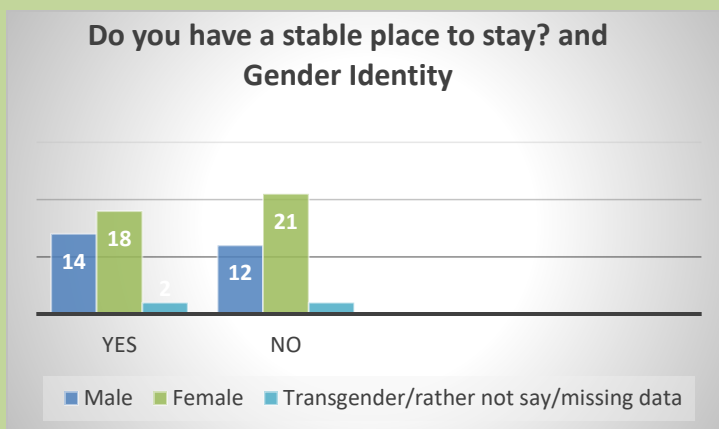


Figure 13 - Current Stable Place to Stay and Gender Identity

	Yes	No	Total	
Male	14	12	26	
Female	18	21	39	
Transgender	0	1	1	
Rather not say	1	1	2	
Missing data	1		1	
Total	N	34	35	69
	%	49	51	100.0



		Age Group			
		17-20	21-24	25 over	Total
Do you have a stable place to stay?	Yes	13	11	10	34
	No	14	9	12	35
Total		27	20	22	69

		Ethnicity			Total
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	
Do you have a stable place to sleep?	Yes	29	5	0	34
	No	30	3	2	35
Total		59	8	2	69

### Risk of Being Homeless and Gender Identity

Participants were asked if they were at risk of becoming homeless. A high percentage of participants, 68% expressed that they were at risk of being homeless. Of these the majority were female youth (61%), males made up 31% and all transgender or “preferred not to say” youth felt they were at risk of becoming homeless. According to this survey, all age groups of youths are at a high risk of becoming homeless or experiencing housing instability. 86% of Indigenous participants stated they were at risk of becoming homeless or experiencing housing instability. In addition, 82% of those who considered themselves to be at risk of becoming homeless or experiencing housing instability were not attending school.

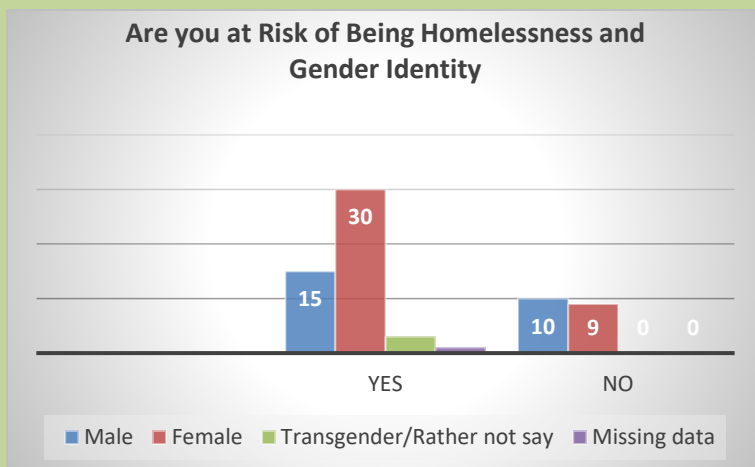


Figure 14 - Risk of Being Homeless and Gender Identity

	Yes	No	Missing data	Total	
Male	15	10	1	26	
Female	30	9		39	
Transgender	1	0		1	
Rather not say	2	0		2	
Missing data	1			1	
Total	N	49	19	1	69
	%	68	30	1	100.0

		Age Group			
		17-20	21-24	25 over	Total
Are you at Risk of Homelessness	Yes	18	13	18	49
	No	9	7	3	19
Missing data				1	1
Total		27	20	22	69
% youth at risk		67	65	82	71.0

		Ethnicity			Total
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	
Risk of Homelessness	Yes	42	5	2	49
	No	16	3	0	19
Missing data		1			1
Total		59	8	2	69

		Education		Total
		Yes	No	
Risk of Homelessness	Yes	9	40	49
	No	8	11	19
Missing data		1		1
Total		18	51	69

### Considered Homeless and Gender Identity

Participants were asked if they considered themselves to be homeless. Figure 15 shows that nearly half, (46%) of participants considered themselves homeless and 60% of these were female youth. At 59%, the 24 and younger age group had the highest percentage of those that considered themselves homeless. In terms of ethnicity, 88% of those who stated that they were homeless were Indigenous.



	Yes	No	MD	Total
Male	11	14	1	26
Female	19	20		39
Transgender	0	1		1
Rather not say	1	1		2
Missing data	1			1
Total	N	32	36	1
	%	46	52	1.4
				100.0

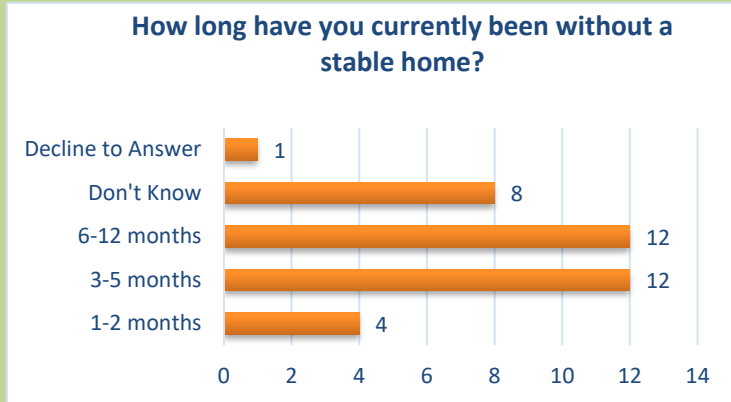
Figure 15 - Considered Homeless and Gender Identity

		Age Group			Total
		17-20	21-24	25 over	
Are you Homeless?	Yes	13	6	13	32
	No	14	14	8	36
Missing data				1	1
% considered homeless		48	30.0	59.0	46.4
Total		27	20	22	69

		Ethnicity			Total
		Indigenous	Metis	Non-Indigenous	
Are you Homeless?	Yes	29	3	1	33
	No	29	5	1	35
Missing data		1			1
Total		59	8	2	69

## Estimated Length of Being Without a Stable Home

Participants were asked about an estimated length of time that they had been without a stable home. Only 37 (54%) of participants responded to this question. As a percentage of the total sample, 17% had been without a stable home for 6-12 months, 17% between 3-5 months and 6% from 1 day to two months.



	Frequency	%
1-2 months	4	6
3-5 months	12	17
6-12 months	12	17
Don't Know	8	12
Decline to Answer	1	1
Total responses	37	54
Missing data	32	46
Total	69	100.0

Figure 16 - Estimated Length of Been without a Stable Home

## Over the past year, how much of the time have you been homeless/experiencing housing instability?

This question was responded to by only 40 (58%) of youth who had been homeless or experiencing housing instability. Most responded that they had been without a home for more than 3 months. In the older age group of 25-30 we found that most participants had experienced a length of homelessness between 6-12 months in the past year.

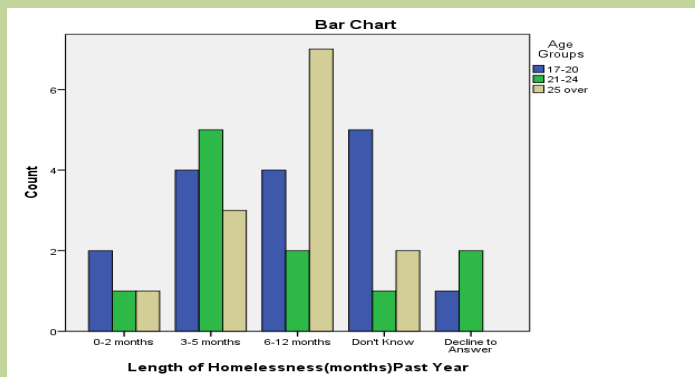


Figure 17 - Length of homeless over the past year

		Age Groups			Total
		17-20	21-24	25 over	
Length of Homelessness (months) Past Year	0-2 months	2	1	1	4
	3-5 months	4	5	3	12
	6-12 months	4	2	7	13
	Don't Know	5	1	2	8
	Decline to Answer	1	2	0	3
Total		16	11	13	40

## Estimated Times of Homelessness/Housing Instability Past Year

The number of times that youth had been homeless or experiencing housing instability varied from 1 time to 3 or more times. Figure 18 shows that 29% of participants had experienced homelessness or housing instability 3 or more times and most of these were youth between 25-30 years old. Female youth were the highest number of participants who had been 3 or more times experiencing homelessness/ housing instability.

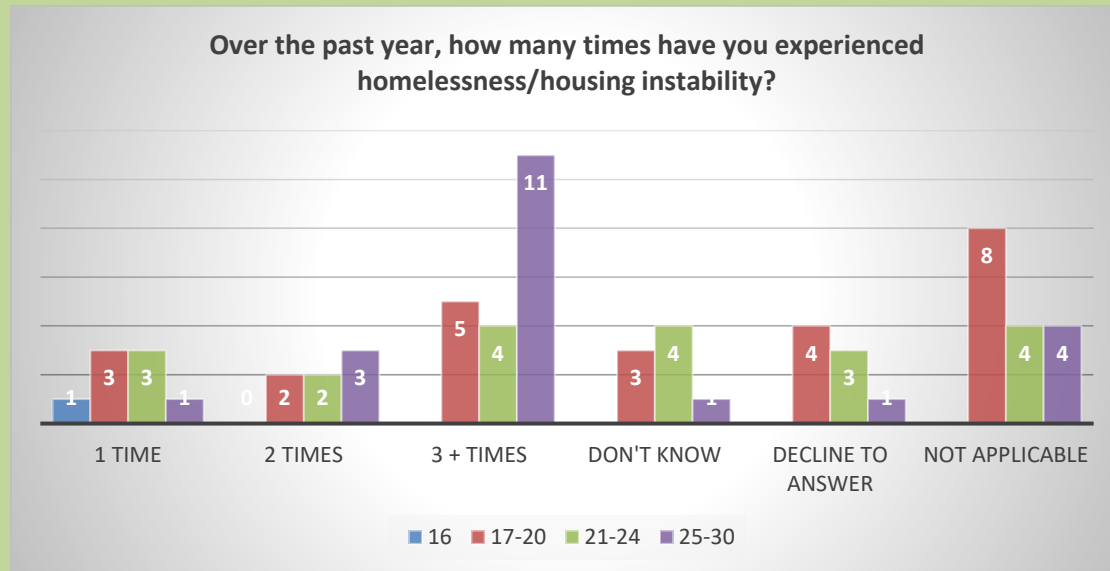


Figure 18 - Times homeless

		Age Groups				Total	
		16	17-20	21-24	25 over	N	%
Estimated Times of homelessness/housing instability past year	1 time	1	3	3	1	8	12
	2 times	0	2	2	3	7	10
	3 or more times	0	5	4	11	20	29
	Don't know	0	3	4	1	8	11
	Decline to Answer	0	4	3	1	8	12
Not Applicable		0	8	4	4	16	23
Missing data			1		1	2	3
Total		1	26	20	22	69	100

	1 time	2 times	3 or more times	Don't know	Decline to Answer	Not Applicable	Missing data	Total
Male	0	2	7	4	5	8		26
Female	8	3	13	3	2	8	2	39
Transgender	0	1	0	0	0			1
Rather not say	0	1	0	0	1			2
Missing data				1				1
Total	8	7	20	8	8	16	2	69

## 8. MAIN CAUSES OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN THE NORTH

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This question asked participants to prioritize the main causes of youth homelessness and housing instability in northern Manitoba. There were a variety of responses that are interconnected with each other. The highest response or cause of homelessness was a dysfunctional family life, then a lack of housing, involvement with the criminal justice system, poverty, and parental addictions as outlined in the list below.

Order	Causes	Responses
1	Dysfunctional family life	39
2	Lack of housing	32
3	Involvement with the criminal justice system	26
4	Poverty	26
5	Parental addictions	25
6	Aging out of care	24
7	Lack of activities for youth	18
8	Intergenerational trauma	13
9	Parents are homeless	12
10	Mental health issues	11
11	Racism	10
12	Physical health	7
13	Sexual identity	5
14	High rent	3
15	Alcoholism	1
16	Co-signer issues	1

*Figure 19 - Main causes of homelessness*

## 9. WHAT CHANGES WOULD YOUTH LIKE TO SEE?

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### What kind of changes would you like to see in Thompson to support youth and their families?

Among the answers to this question, youth suggested a variety of changes. The three highest responses were housing for youth, a youth centre and shelter and youth employment training.

Order	Changes	Responses
1	Housing for youth	49
2	A Youth centre and shelter	48
3	Job training for youth	43
4	More cultural and recreational activities	26
5	Support regarding addictions	24
6	Support for parents economically and psychologically	18
7	More social and sport activities	15
8	Support for those with disabilities	12
9	Mental health resources	11
10	BCR program community	10
11	Support for LGBTQ youth	9
12	Information about physical health	8
13	Break the cycle	1
14	For marginalized youth	1
15	Programing for school	1

Figure 20 - Changes participants would like to see in Thompson



Adult participants chose to participate in the area that was connected to their job, experience or personal interest. We also created a group for youth. The purpose of this group was to provide a safe and engaged environment for youth to express their comments without feeling intimidated. The Youth discussions were open in terms of the subject area for discussion: Individual, family, systems, and structural.

In total, we had eight groups in the two focus groups. Each group had a facilitator and note taker. All groups used the following questions to facilitate the discussions:

1. Based on what has been learned so far, what are the next steps in terms of: Prevention, Emergency response, Accommodation?
  - a. Systems
  - b. Structures
  - c. Individual, personal relationship, family
2. The city of Thompson is really good at .....when supporting and helping youth at risk of homelessness. (list as many as possible)
3. The biggest challenges to supporting youth and their families are...?
4. Dream for a moment about the best-case scenario in terms of the necessary supports to address and prevent youth homelessness in Thompson/Northern Manitoba? What would you like to see in 5 years?
5. Who can become involved in working together on this/these issues connected to youth homelessness?
6. What are the next steps needed to bring these ideas into being?
  - a. When?
  - b. Where?

Appendix E shows several tables that summarize the information generated during the two focus groups.



## 11. REFERENCES

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## LIST OF APPENDIXES

- APPENDIX A – Recruitment Poster
- APPENDIX B – Youth Survey
- APPENDIX C – Tally Sheet
- APPENDIX D – Verbal Consent Form
- APPENDIX E – Focus Groups: Summary of Information for Community Action Plan

APPENDIX A – RECRUITMENT POSTER



**MAY 11–19 2016**  
**THOMPSON YOUTH COUNT:**  
**HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING**  
**INSTABILITY**

- This Youth Count (between the ages of 16-29) will provide much needed information on youth, homelessness and housing instability in Thompson.
- It is important to get input from youth themselves on issues that they deal with on a daily basis.
- We also need service providers and community members to help us to complete the Youth Count survey for youth who are homeless, have experiencing housing instability or are vulnerable to housing instability such as those attending special programs
- This is a brief 10 minute survey.



UNIVERSITY  
OF MANITOBA



FOR MORE  
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APPENDIX B – YOUTH SURVEY



NORTHERN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM



FACULTY OF ARTS BUSINESS AND SCIENCE

APPENDIX B – YOUTH SURVEY  
THOMPSON HOMELESS YOUTH COUNT

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

1. Gender Identity:  
a) Male                    b) Female                    c) Transgender                    d) Gender fluid  
e) Gender queer                    f) other                    g) would rather not say
  
2. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. How do you identify?  
a) Aboriginal                    b) Metis                    c) non-Aboriginal
  
4. Are you attending school/university? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Have you ever been involved in the foster care system? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
a. If so, for how long? \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Are you employed in any way? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Doing what?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Have you even been involved in the criminal justice system? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_
  
8. Do you think that homelessness or housing instability is an issue for youth in Thompson?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
a. Where did you sleep last night? \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Where do you go when you need a place to stay?  
i. Couch surf friends and/or family  
ii. Shelter  
iii. Other \_\_\_\_\_  
c. Do you consider yourself homeless? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
If YES,  
i. How long have you currently been without a stable home? \_\_\_ days \_\_\_ months \_\_\_ years  
ii. Over the past year, *how much of the time* have you been homeless/experienced housing instability? [Current episode of homelessness/housing instability. Best estimate]

<input type="radio"/> LENGTH _____ DAYS / WEEKS / MONTHS <input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	IF UNSURE: <input type="radio"/> 0-2 MONTHS <input type="radio"/> 3-5 MONTHS <input type="radio"/> 6-12 MONTHS
---	--

iii. Over the past year, how many different times have you experienced homelessness/housing instability? [Includes this time. Best estimate.]

<input type="radio"/> NUMBER OF TIMES _____ <input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	IF UNSURE: <input type="radio"/> 1 TIME [current episode] <input type="radio"/> 2 TIMES <input type="radio"/> 3 OR MORE TIMES
--	---

iv. How old were you when you first became homeless/started experiencing housing instability?

<input type="radio"/> AGE _____	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------------	----------------------------------	---

**9. Did you move to Thompson in the past year from other community, province or country?**

<input type="radio"/> YES	<input type="radio"/> NO	<input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW	<input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER
---------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------------	---

**a. If you moved to Thompson in the last year, where were you living prior to coming here?**

<input type="radio"/> COMMUNITY NAME _____ <input type="radio"/> AND PROVINCE _____ <input type="radio"/> OR COUNTRY _____ <input type="radio"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="radio"/> DECLINE TO ANSWER	<b>NORTHERN MANITOBA COMMUNITY NAME</b>	
	a. CROSS LAKE b. LAC BROCHET c. LEAF RAPIDS d. NELSON HOUSE e. NORWAY HOUSE f. OXFORD HOUSE g. PUKATAWAGAN h. SHAMATTAWA	i. SPLIT LAKE j. TADOULE LAKE k. THE PAS l. THICKET PORTAGE m. WABOWDEN n. YORK LANDING o. _____

**10. What do you think are the three main causes of youth homelessness in the north? (from the following list, rate #1 for what you consider to be the main cause, then #2 and #3)**

- a) Aging out of care \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Dysfunctional family life \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Intergenerational trauma \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Involvement with the criminal justice system \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Lack of activities for youth \_\_\_\_\_
- f) Lack of housing \_\_\_\_\_
- g) Mental health issues \_\_\_\_\_
- h) Parental addictions \_\_\_\_\_
- i) Parents are homeless \_\_\_\_\_
- j) Physical health \_\_\_\_\_
- k) Poverty \_\_\_\_\_
- l) Racism \_\_\_\_\_
- m) Sexual identity \_\_\_\_\_
- n) Other \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**11. What kind of changes would you like to see in Thompson to support youth and their families?  
(from the following list, rate #1 for most important support, then #2 and #3 )**

- a) A Youth centre and shelter \_\_\_\_\_
- b) Housing for youth \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Information about physical health \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Job training for youth \_\_\_\_\_
- e) Mental health resources \_\_\_\_\_
- f) More cultural and recreational activities \_\_\_\_\_
- g) More social and sport activities \_\_\_\_\_
- h) Support for LGBTQ youth \_\_\_\_\_
- i) Support for parents economically and psychologically \_\_\_\_\_
- j) Support for those with disabilities \_\_\_\_\_
- k) Support regarding addictions \_\_\_\_\_
- l) Other \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C - TALLY SHEET**



NORTHERN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM



FACULTY OF ARTS BUSINESS AND SCIENCE

**APPENDIX C – TALLY SHEET  
THOMPSON HOMELESS YOUTH COUNT**

**Monday May 11 – Friday May 19, 2016.**

TALLY SHEET	
Location: _____	Time: _____ AM/PM
Interviewer: _____	Contact #: _____

Please provide a check mark for every youth who wants to be included as a youth with an unstable housing situation (under the age of 16).

OR

For those who are **not surveyed**, please fill in the sheet below indicating the reason. For those who **DECLINE** or are **OBSERVED** only, but who are clearly homeless, please also indicate their gender, approximate age, and the reason you believe they are homeless (e.g., asleep outside with belongings).

**No names will be provided, simply a check mark.**

#	Location (e.g., building, park, nearest intersection)	Reason not Surveyed					*Observed Homelessness				
		< 16 years old	Declined	Already counted	Screened Out		Observed*	Observed homeless ness	Approx. Age	Observed Gender	Indicators of Homelessness
					C	D					
1											
2											
3											
4											
5											
6											
7											
8											
9											
10											
11											
12											
13											
14											
15											

## APPENDIX D – VERBAL CONSENT FORM



NORTHERN SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM



FACULTY OF ARTS BUSINESS AND SCIENCE

### APPENDIX D - VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT THOMPSON HOMELESS YOUTH COUNT

*Hi*, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a volunteer for the Thompson Youth Count survey. We are conducting a survey to provide better programs and services to youth who may be experiencing homelessness or housing instability issues. This survey takes about 10 minutes to complete. Participation is voluntary and your name will not be recorded. You can choose to skip any question or to stop the interview at any time. The results will contribute to the understanding of northern youth and homelessness and will help with research to improve services. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet for five years.

**Important Note:** Please know that we will have to share what you tell us in the following circumstances: if you disclose information about plans to harm yourself or others, information concerning any unknown emotional, physical or sexual abuse of children, or information about any other criminal activities not already known to authorities. In these cases, we are required to report this information to the appropriate authorities.

*Participant Credit or Remuneration:* You understand that you will not be paid for completing the survey. A gift certificate of \$ 5 will be given to youth participants in appreciation of your time in completing this survey.

The Thompson Homeless Youth Count 2016 is sponsored by the University of Manitoba and the University College of the North and is funded by the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network and the Manitoba Research Alliance. If you want more information or have concerns about this project, feel free to contact Dr. Marleny Bonnycastle at 204 677 1455, or Dr. Maureen Simpkins at 204 677 6405 Ext. 5038.

This research has been approved by the Psychology/Sociology Research Ethics Board (University of Manitoba and the University College of the North). If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Secretariat at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

**DO YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_**

**If yes**, proceed with screening questions.

**If no**, thank the person for their time and record refusal in the TALLY sheet table.



**APPENDIX E - FOCUS GROUPS: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION FOR COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN**

**GATHERING ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS: BEGINNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
A COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

**IN THOMPSON, MB**  
April 10, 2017 NOTES

Focus groups Team:  
Lee Anne Deegan, UM  
Lynelle Zahayko, UM  
Maureen Simpkins, UCN  
Marleny Bonnycastle, UM

**Question #1: Based on what has been learned so far, what are the next steps in terms of:  
Prevention, Emergency response, Accommodation?**

**A. SYSTEMS**

Level	Adults	Youth
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth Shelter – age appropriate                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o youth to feel comfortable to approach service providers</li> <li>o social media</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Parents are hesitant to contact CFS for help</li> <li>- Children end up in streets/running away</li> <li>- Family conciliation</li> <li>- Intervention in younger years</li> <li>- Supports at finding homes and expectations</li> <li>- Show by example to youth day to day</li> <li>- Education, training for youth families</li> <li>- Needing support during transitioning from youth years to adulthood</li> <li>- Programming advertised!</li> <li>- Lack of prevention programs</li> <li>- Transportation, safe ride in evenings</li> <li>- Events – community wide participation                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o bike parties</li> <li>o sobriety parties</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Building relationships with youth</li> <li>- Youth that couch surf at friends – should the friend’s parents call CFS and have someone talk with them on what going on?</li> <li>- Kids that are in care ... RCMP have to look for them after hours or they are AWOL for curfew.</li> <li>- Do social workers follow up on what they are doing with them?</li> <li>- Nickel Days for more support when youth come from other communities, become stranded, and have nowhere to go.</li> <li>- Lack of youth mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organizations need to work/learn about other organizations</li> <li>- Need more advertisements for programs/services, need a marketing team                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o social media</li> <li>o boards</li> <li>o buses – why no ads on buses?</li> <li>o lots of spaces</li> <li>o youtube – ad-marketing</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Many youths who experience homelessness in Thompson are often youth/child welfare system.</li> <li>- Discharge from system and resources/supports are gone at 18.</li> <li>- Supports should be extended to 21-25 to help them be more successful as a system to help provide sustainability</li> <li>- Expanding homeless shelters keeping them open longer with less restrictions</li> <li>- Group shelters so people can get room together</li> <li>- Encourage education</li> <li>- If youth are under 18 and go to shelter they are scared into hiding because they fear child welfare system, will not access services</li> <li>- Homeless shelter, transitional housing, CMHA</li> </ul>

<b>Emergency Response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are some emergency placement homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Nikonan</li> <li>▪ Wuskwatim</li> <li>▪ YWCA</li> <li>▪ Create a team to go and support youth</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Food programs in schools</li> <li>- Networking between agencies – sharing information about program</li> <li>- Education – for youth to be aware of all programs and services available</li> <li>- Psych ward model at Victoria hospital</li> </ul>	
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<b>Accommodation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are no emergency shelters for youth in Thompson and surrounding communities –These are youth transitioning out of CFS and they may not have contact with biological family-estranged. A place that youth can go when parents are drinking. Explore options and support services that can be implemented to ensure youth are not apprehended unnecessarily. This why it is so CRUCIAL to have CFS involved in these discussions and action plans.</li> <li>- There are no services for youth adolescent and adults for those undiagnosed with FASD, no supports available.</li> <li>- Need for youth shelter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ advocacy re: accommodations</li> <li>○ affordable recreation</li> <li>○ knowing who the homeless youth are – they do exist</li> <li>○ sharing information between agencies</li> <li>○ need more arts/cultural events</li> <li>○ stronger families</li> <li>○ Community Advisory Board for youth</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Dedicated number of rooms for youth in existing places (ie. YWCA, shelter)</li> <li>- Lack of safe spaces for youth</li> <li>- Knowing Band Council Resolution (BCR'd) youth that are coming in to better prepare</li> <li>- Drop in center for youth/families</li> <li>- Group home /shelter</li> <li>- Having a centre for youth to congregate together safely</li> <li>- Point system for encouragement to do chores within the centre to earn points, instead of paying money directly to youth (example, 10 points for cleaning bathrooms – earn points to get a gym pass)</li> <li>- Spirituality is important in recovery</li> <li>- Staff educated on all people – empathy</li> <li>- Safe place for youth to go, to work, help look for place without needing a co-signer.</li> </ul>	
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## A. STRUCTURES

Level	Adults	Youth
Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emphasis on self-esteem/self-worth</li> <li>- LGBTQ/different races</li> <li>- Consistency/creating independence for children in care lack of skills like about renting, paying bills, time management et.</li> <li>- Knowing rules/education about what rights are for renters to prevent eviction</li> <li>- Think tank – getting people together</li> <li>- All government levels to be involved</li> <li>- Gaining employment</li> <li>- Education, identify what homelessness looks like</li> <li>- Root causes – local and outlying communities</li> <li>- Aging out of care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Project to be led by youth</li> <li>- Building to be utilized, youth centre</li> <li>- Condemned building could be used for advertisements               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Youth want a facility!</li> <li>o daycare – arts</li> <li>o counseling – culture</li> <li>o education</li> </ul> </li> <li>- We need to network together, not go against each other</li> <li>- Need a one centre fits all</li> <li>- Because of the stresses of being homeless can initiate addictions</li> <li>- Guaranteed income may alleviate stresses linked to homelessness</li> <li>- Offer family subsidy or sponsorship to take in youth at risk for homelessness with the requirements/care plan to get help, improve behaviour etc.</li> </ul>
Emergency Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- About 1 out of 100 youth under 18 years of age who run from group home facilities may stay in cells.</li> <li>- Making sure their kids have a place to stay: like mom or dad, before calling CFS</li> <li>- Advocacy</li> <li>- When youth are in group homes, staff can't keep them from leaving</li> <li>- Hidden youth homelessness... they may be staying with friends, or other places. Rarely do you see homeless youth on the streets</li> <li>- Community safety offices having more of a role</li> <li>- Arts Center that provides programming for youth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Price of alcohol and cigarettes should be more</li> <li>- Make jobs more accessible</li> <li>- Make more affordable housing</li> <li>- Even if you work minimum wage it doesn't cover cost of living</li> <li>- More transitional housing such as housing first initiatives</li> <li>- KTC programs give jobs to people, who are homeless, employment programs, jobs/skill building in the province.</li> <li>- Crisis center (only 28-day program) after they have nowhere to go following this and end up homeless or going back</li> <li>- Addictions cause people to lose their children, their income from child benefits is taken causing domino effect, lose housing and can't get kids back</li> </ul>
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rental- co-signer</li> <li>- Youth center</li> <li>- Homeless shelter</li> <li>- Crisis Center</li> <li>- Something like what they have in Winnipeg. For example, the Resource Assistance for Youth (RAY) Here and Now project for running away youth or those that have nowhere to go</li> <li>- Resources for families</li> <li>- Programs like Teen Challenge of Central Canada, a Christian-based rehabilitation program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community leader               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Schools</li> <li>o parents be resources</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## B. INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY

Level	Adults	Youth
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);"><b>Prevention, Emergency Response, Accommodation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family pressure to move out</li> <li>- Public is aware: homeless issue</li> <li>- Billboards, posters</li> <li>- Family breakdowns, history</li> <li>- Stigma, public issues</li> <li>- Housing, high cost, overcrowding</li> <li>- Substance abusers, static</li> <li>- Working family, stresses, unprepared</li> <li>- Family support</li> <li>- Self-esteem, no support</li> <li>- Life skills</li> <li>- Interested in residential school and support intergenerational trauma</li> <li>- Mental health and addictions</li> <li>- Employment and training</li> <li>- Youth don't know what they want               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o youth need vision</li> <li>o especially when not from a professional family</li> <li>o need to create opportunities for those on social assistance</li> </ul> </li> <li>- 2 kids from school board were in homeless shelter</li> <li>- No accommodation for youth</li> <li>- Everyone has a story</li> <li>- Families repeat themselves</li> <li>- If something good happens, they will change</li> <li>- Need change for kids. Should not be at shelter</li> <li>- Need structures for kids to work individually, need mentors               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o not so much in system, but individually</li> <li>o need intervention</li> <li>o "pay it forward", those who have made positive changes</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Letting people know this is an issue               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o identify who they actually are</li> <li>o Boys and Girls Club                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 14 and up need more programming</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- Leadership/mentoring programs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o force interaction</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Abandonment</li> <li>- Sense of belonging needs to be created</li> <li>- More intimate group homes for youth specifically FN (First Nations) communities</li> <li>- For First Nations communities to own homes in town where their youth have somewhere to go</li> <li>- Peer support/outreach: example, bear clan from Winnipeg               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Accountability/ownership</li> </ul> </li> <li>- NIB, grant funding is available and needs to be tapped into</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some people don't want help so individual counselling can provide alternatives to help people trust these resources and leave home to better selves</li> <li>- Maslow's hierarchy of needs: people need basic needs met first before they can access need to improve self/get help</li> </ul>

**Question #2: The city of Thompson is really good at .....when supporting and helping youth at risk of homelessness. (list as many as possible)**

Adults	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are "annual forums" on addressing youth suicide with NRHA and KTC host separately. They more or less bring in folks from other territories and famous people to offer a onetime presentation that our population never see or hear from again. There is no after care. Its back to business when the forums are complete. The communities are back in the same boat with same issues,</li> <li>- Moving forward with "Pride" groups</li> <li>- From 5 years, ago to now progress has happened               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Labor ready programs                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ quick cash [for] daily work</li> </ul> </li> <li>o informal services</li> <li>o who you know to get services quicker</li> <li>o more formally integrated</li> <li>o emergency response</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Events like Nickel Days</li> <li>- Recreational facilities, though nothing or anything is free</li> <li>- Limits of activities for those not interested in sports</li> <li>- Fundraising for specific projects</li> <li>- What is doing well?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Boys and Girls Club</li> <li>o Ma-mow-we-tak</li> <li>o VRCC</li> <li>o After school</li> </ul> </li> <li>- (Film makers)</li> <li>- Teacher - relational</li> <li>- -breaking down - authoritarian</li> <li>- Patrols</li> <li>- Play to go</li> <li>- Cultural identity               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o leadership mentorship</li> <li>o funds</li> <li>o bully - safe place</li> <li>o funds through:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NIBA - IRS fund (healing)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- Something culturally, sports</li> <li>- Everyone doing the best they can with what they have</li> <li>- Lots of new people working with youth</li>   <li><b>Some Work but need improvement</b></li> <li>- More work with 18 and over but see need to work with younger</li> <li>- Poor communication between different projects doing something               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o making sure right people are at the table</li> <li>o relationships! Gets things done</li> <li>o need to focus the energy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boys and Girls Club               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o after school 5-12 yrs.</li> <li>o late night 12 - 18 yrs.</li> <li>o youth build</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Question #3: The biggest challenges to supporting youth and their families are...?

Adults	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of issues –lack of ID's i.e.: status cards, photo identification. CFS youth experience difficulty securing jobs due to lack of Identification. No Driver's license is also another factor contributing to job security. INAC (Indian Affairs) has made changes on obtaining status cards. It is not so easy to obtain status cards when they have expired. More so difficult for youth in care as they have no means to get information required when they are estranged from family. No money to get their certificates and may be too shy to ask for help and give up. I have noticed some of the youth may have trouble reading and writing.</li> <li>- There is no counselling/counsellors readily available to talk with youth unless they are a ward of CFS.</li> <li>- Child Advocates only service children and youth that are in care of CFS system. This has to change. Child advocates should include all children regardless.</li> <li>- Mental health issues are on the rise with this young population. It is difficult to access mental health services without a proper diagnosis. Most cases the diagnosis given is alcohol and or substance abuse psychosis, referred for treatment, and may be prescribed medication for schizophrenia.</li> <li>- MYS Transition House               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 4 youth at a time</li> <li>o skills learning</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Reaching out to schools to teach basic life skills before leaving care</li> <li>- Having a plan in place before aging out of care</li> <li>- Accountability</li> <li>- More prevention/ less reactive</li> <li>- More individualized</li> <li>- Not knowing the families at risk</li> <li>- Youth not telling anyone as they don't want to get in trouble with cfs while they are couch surfing</li> <li>- Keeping confidentially about families</li> <li>- Inter-agency collaboration</li> <li>- Thompson CAB focus seems primarily on adults</li> <li>- Having problem at home - who are youth talking to about this?</li> <li>- High needs but never enough money</li> <li>- Moving back and forth from small communities – youth getting lost in the shuffle.</li> <li>- Do they have connections in Thompson when they leave their community? What happens when such relations break down here?</li> <li>- Communication/not so much money               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o collaborative</li> <li>o people doing work (from side of their desk)</li> <li>o you will never be going to prove that there is a gap</li> <li>o decisions and directions will motivate people</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Some of the youth are already homeless-they are couch surfing, staying with friends and relatives, no fixed addresses. This is a risky trend leaving them vulnerable to unhealthy activities. This can infringe on their job searches and securing an apartment/home when they have no history of renting or adequate income.</li> <li>- Need a "youth" program</li> <li>- No transition system</li> <li>- Pregnancy</li> <li>- Kids now dealing with cognitive problems No supports to children with FASD</li> <li>- Many adults, cognitive difficulties</li> <li>- Here and now report – those who suffer from delays more prone to homelessness</li> <li>- child welfare system can't deal with teens "delayed"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unstable living environment</li> <li>- LGBTQ – parents disowned</li> <li>- Fantasize about my life</li> <li>- Seeking out experience               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o inspired by shows/movies about living alone</li> <li>o didn't want to couch surf</li> <li>o no family to turn to, had to do it on my own</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Grand ideas about living on my own               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o bills, life skills aren't taught</li> <li>o skipped on basic skills</li> <li>o only parents teach those skills</li> <li>o high school skips to mortgage and life insurance</li> <li>o didn't know about Service Canada</li> <li>o parents 'role to assist</li> <li>o drunk people not allowed in shelter,</li> <li>o drunk tank won't stop addictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- We're small, we can't do anything, we need people in power to care</li> <li>- Not paint [with] same brush for everyone               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o PM spent 30 million from foster care to treat individual cases</li> <li>o not enough money in prevention programs                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ # 1 prevention programs</li> <li>▪ we have enough demand on foster care, let's not stop the supply</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- Gentrification issue               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o no affordability</li> <li>o need to allow subsidized living</li> <li>o forced to couch surf</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Centre with social workers that know where the youth will be to reduce costs</li> <li>- Those without parents and 18               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Too late to qualify</li> <li>o No ID/SIN/Birth certificate</li> <li>o suffers from social anxiety, no one to go and support to get ball rolling</li> </ul> </li> <li>- If you're young, not safe at home the police just bring you back to home if under a certain age               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o youth not given a safe space                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Winnipeg – temporary shelter for youth</li> <li>▪ they don't have to contact CFS</li> <li>▪ wish something like that was set up here</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- Poverty, financial instability</li> <li>- Orphaned, no family in Thompson to support               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o addictions, using all money to feed addictions</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Issues resulting from relationship breakdown (financial dependency)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o financial restrictions lead to couch surfing, leads to sexual exploitation</li> <li>o bad relationship with parents – specifically LGBTQ</li> <li>o youth are not wanting to stay in foster care place, wanting to leave</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Not growing up in a financially stable home, creates poverty cycle, intergenerational instability</li> <li>- Issues of finding jobs because of backgrounds, i.e. Discrimination, fired from previous job, lack of skills, criminal record, lack of diploma Age, if youth is under 18 then age can restrict your ability to get a job, under 18 you do not qualify for social assistance, and if you do not have a residence, you are not qualified. The system works against you to create gaps.</li> <li>- Many youths with FASD</li> <li>- Lack of resources</li> </ul>

**Question #4: Dream for a moment about the best-case scenario in terms of the necessary supports to address and prevent youth homelessness in Thompson/Northern Manitoba? What would you like to see in 5 years?**

Adults	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advisory committee for youth homelessness (like current CAB, but for youth)</li> <li>- Kids to be able to stay in care until 25 years regardless of life path</li> <li>- Youth facility</li> <li>- Having a place for youth to go to feel safe. Something that's open 24 hours with staff on site, having beds, food etc.</li> <li>- Helping them look for places with cheap rent, with no co- sign requirements.</li> <li>- Programs that provide wrap around supports and are youth centred</li> <li>- Ability to get short term work without ID, experience</li> <li>- Cash daily</li> <li>- Permanent funding – not have to apply every 6 months for supportive programming</li> <li>- Agencies – to take next step after planning meetings</li> <li>- Always lots of talks - needs to be action</li> <li>- Educating the community</li> <li>- Changing community attitudes</li> <li>- Formalized, educated, integrated process to prevent homelessness</li> <li>- Good parenting groups for youth</li> <li>- Family support for kids who are homeless</li> <li>- Having people to talk to when they are having trouble at home and/or get kicked out before it gets to be crisis mode</li> <li>- Having more activities like boys and girls club for youth</li> <li>- Working with youth teaching them about culture, helping them find their voice someone to empower them, like culture camps</li> <li>- Want more access to resources               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o need a 24 hour HUB - always there to help</li> <li>o working more collaboratively</li> <li>o safe place for youth</li> <li>o Need communication with Chiefs in communities</li> <li>o need transportation back home</li> <li>o individual supports also</li> <li>o liaison with all communities</li> </ul> </li> <li>- I would like to see the youth involved in all discussions around services and obtain their feedback prior to any developments of services. We can explore a variety of ways we can achieve this as a whole in the committee.</li> <li>- I would like to see more counselling services towards this population 24 hours daily. In person counselling, one on one with follow up care plan. More case managing for those who may require extra help and support</li> <li>- I would like an emergency centre for youth to go when in need for safety and have social workers with counseling skills be readily available for counselling at any given time for counselling and support services. One male and one female counsellors daily and nightly. Culturally relevant to meet the diversity of this population.</li> <li>- I would like to see a retreat opportunity for this population- Go out on the land for a week or two to reintroduce youth to Mother Nature. Away from the hustle and busyness from everyday living can enlighten anyone. Learning to live off the land will encourage a true appreciation of life and purpose. No cell phones, no TV, no games just the world of nature with appropriate personnel available. Establish a strategic plan to move forward with the new enlightenment and hope with supports and meet regularly to evaluate progress and so forth.</li> <li>- I want to see all Child Advocates in Manitoba advocate for all children and youth.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Late night alternatives               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Red Frog (US)</li> <li>o city wide scavenger hunt                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ whole city</li> </ul> </li> <li>o community events                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ donations</li> </ul> </li> <li>o bike parties – creating a vibe</li> <li>o movie nights</li> <li>o howling wolves – NA AA sobriety dances</li> <li>o Transportation – buses stop at 6-7 pm</li> <li>o no safe cheap transportation</li> <li>o if they had ads promoting late night van “Street Reach”</li> <li>o creating a park that’s inviting to reduce harm reduction</li> <li>o place for people to congregate</li> <li>o police stop – “no loitering”</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Need a place for homeless</li> <li>- Could save so much money if you had a place for homeless people to go</li> <li>- Copy Winnipeg’s house model               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ie. public stepping up to open homes for room and board</li> </ul> </li> <li>- More focus on strengths of homeless youth and not what is wrong with them</li> <li>- Youth centre:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Service for youth</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Help build skills</li> <li>- Employed by youth               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o if on welfare, should be able to make money</li> <li>o creating point system to do chores, little achievable things</li> <li>o life skills                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ need motivation to do the stuff</li> <li>▪ no self-esteem – mentors</li> <li>▪ treated like a person/human</li> <li>▪ allowed to keep their stuff</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>- More centres for youth to sleep in and also go to during the day as well               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o youth centre would be able to connect youth to resources, housing, employment</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Sweat lodge (aboriginal culture needs to be included – studies and demographics for Manitoba suggest this)</li> <li>- LGBTQ* Safe Place</li> <li>- All staff trained on all high-risk categories               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o disabilities</li> <li>o addiction</li> <li>o mental health</li> <li>o active listening</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Each person has their own room and lockers for valuables</li> <li>- Point system – cleaning, helping, make meals, etc. –</li> <li>- Social workers available at all time</li> <li>- Phone calls allowed</li> <li>- Clothes, etc. Provided and laundry facilities</li> <li>- Resources – known about and shared with youth</li> <li>- Emphasis on self-esteem and skill</li> </ul>

**Question #4 continuation...**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I want to see the Truth and Reconciliation recommendations and the Jordan's Principle guide us in our work towards eliminating youth homelessness. Taking into consideration majority of this population are Indigenous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family access               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o taxi slips/bus passes (maybe part of point system to go home?)</li> <li>o budgeting skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Nutritional Food and schedules               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o encourage healthy living (i.e., waking up at same time, eating regularly, exercising, gym passes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Daycare at site</li> </ul>
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**Question #5: Who can become involved in working together on this/these issues connected to youth homelessness?**

Adults	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All service providers to work more cohesively               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o to work outside of the box</li> <li>o don't focus too much on mandate</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Women's center at the YWCA</li> <li>- Churches that provide a valued place for youth to talk with someone</li> <li>- Bible camp</li> <li>- Programs and services that currently help youth and their families</li> <li>- City of Thompson</li> <li>- school boards</li> <li>- Mental health</li> <li>- child and family services</li> <li>- MYS (MacDonald Youth Services)</li> <li>- Boys and Girls</li> <li>- research it nationally</li> <li>- does hub work? Main Street North</li> <li>- organization donate a person each night to get this rolling</li> <li>- Access Centers – also idea</li> <li>- social work students</li> <li>- MKO (Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakinak)</li> <li>- Youth facility open in June... will be 24 hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boy's and Girl's club – youth frequent because of difficult home situations</li> <li>- Salvation Army, food bank</li> <li>- CFS, income assistance, MYS</li> </ul>

**Question #6. What are the next steps needed to bring these ideas into being?**

- o **When?**
- o **Where?**

Adults	Youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working together</li> <li>- Family services</li> <li>- Community support networks</li> <li>- Community Action plan for youth homeless</li> <li>- Agency coming together to talk about youth homeless and making plans</li> <li>- Teen help support groups</li> <li>- Schools maps</li> <li>- CAB for youth</li> </ul>	