



2023 INDIGENOUS HOMELESS COUNTS

Results in Metro Vancouver



4,821 PEOPLE

WERE FOUND TO BE **EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**IN METRO VANCOUVER

THIS HAS INCREASED FROM 3,634
IN 2020



IN 2023

821 (or 33%)

RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS INDIGENOUS IN 2020

711 (or 33%)

OF THE

RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED AS INDIGENOUS

64%

HAVE A HISTORY WITH THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND WHILE

6%
REPORTED

PERSONAL

INVOLVEMENT, THE

MAJORITY IS

INTERGENERATIONAL

IN ADDITION

51%

REPORTED A HISTORY
WITH THE

FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

THE LEGACY OF COLONIALISM CONTINUES TO NEGATIVELY IMPACT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

58%

OF THE **INDIGENOUS** HOMELESS
POPULATION IS **UNSHELTERED**COMPARED TO

51%
IN 2020 AND
25%
OF THE NON-INDIGENOUS
HOMELESS POPULATION

DISPROPORTIONATE

2.4%

OF METRO
VANCOUVER'S

GENERAL

POPULATION
IDENTIFIED AS
INDIGENOUS
IN 2023

33% OF METRO

VANCOUVER'S
HOMELESS

POPULATION
IDENTIFIED AS
INDIGENOUS
IN 2023

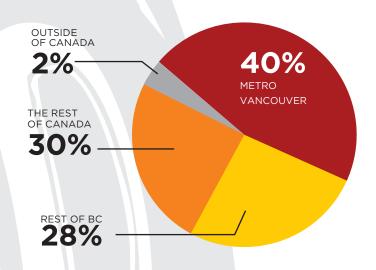
Indigenous Peoples are over

13 TIMES more likely to be homeless

2023 INDIGENOUS HOMELESS COUNTS

Results in Metro Vancouver

WHERE INDIGENOUS RESPONDENTS CAME FROM



IN 2023

77%

HAVE BEEN HOMELESS
FOR OVER A YEAR

60%

EXPERIENCED
HOMELESSNESS FOR THE
FIRST TIME BEFORE
THEY WERE 25

5%
BECAME HOMELESS
AS ELDERS

IN 2020

55%
HAVE BEEN HOMELESS
FOR OVER A YEAR

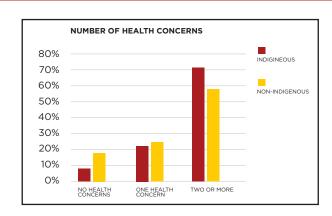
56%

EXPERIENCED
HOMELESSNESS FOR THE
FIRST TIME BEFORE
THEY WERE 25

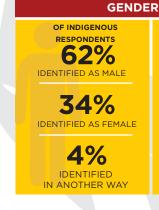
3%
BECAME HOMELESS
AS ELDERS

HEALTH CONDITIONS

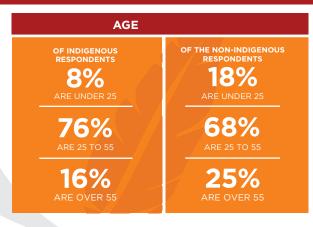




DEMOGRAPHICS













ABOUT THE 2023 METRO VANCOUVER INDIGENOUS HOMELESS COUNT

The 2023 Metro Vancouver Indigenous Homeless Count (Count) is a 24-hour snapshot of Indigenous Peoples who were homeless in the Metro Vancouver region on March 8, 2023. It also included people staying overnight in homeless shelters and those using homelessness services on the day of the Count.

The purpose of the Indigenous Homeless Count is to estimate the number of Indigenous peoples who are homeless in the Metro Vancouver region, obtain a demographic profile of this population, and identify trends compared to previous counts. This current information will be used in the Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee (IHSC) Community Plan update.

Since 2002, homeless counts have been conducted across Metro Vancouver every three years. This is the first year the Federal government ran a dedicated Indigenous count without appending it to a larger count. This dedicated Count required a rethinking of the overall methodology. This is discussed in detail later in the report.

Decision-makers, funders and community agencies have relied on the regional count to understand trends in the visible homeless population. Count numbers are understood to be the minimum number of people who are homeless on a given day in the Metro Vancouver region. We know the count underestimates the number of people who are actually homeless.

The IHSC provided oversight for the count methodology. As in previous years, Infocus Management Consulting served as the Indigenous Coordinator and coordinated the count of Indigenous Peoples who were homeless in partnership with the IHSC and Indigenous service agencies.

The 2023 Indigenous Homeless Count was made possible through funding from the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this report, the term "Indigenous" is used for consistency with previous reports. We acknowledge the Federal Government's commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and acknowledge that most Indigenous Nations globally refer to themselves by their own names.

With any discussion regarding Indigenous homelessness, the methodology or findings must acknowledge history and intergenerational trauma. To adequately understand this intergenerational crisis, the reader must understand the ways in which Indigenous Peoples in Canada have been impacted by continued colonization, their unique relationship with the Government of Canada and associated agencies, Christian churches and mainstream society.

The enduring effects of colonization, the legacy of the residential school system and the impact of child welfare and the foster care system continue to impact the daily experience of many Indigenous Peoples and families, and directly contribute to the high incidence of Indigenous homelessness. These underlying factors are emphasized throughout this report, underpin the findings and are directly linked to the report's recommendations.

In 2012, the Canadian Homelessness Research Network released a Canadian definition of Homelessness, that attempted to capture the effect of homelessness as described by members of the community experiencing the issues firsthand:

Homelessness describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioral or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing."

In 2013, the Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee for Metro Vancouver agreed by consensus to the following community-based definition of homelessness which is integral to their Governance Manual:

"Homelessness" refers to two groups of Indigenous homeless. The first group is those who are considered "absolute homeless" and the second group is those who live "at risk of homelessness."

According to the United Native Nations Aboriginal Homelessness Report (2001):

"Homelessness"- included in its entirety - describes those who have suffered from the effects of colonization and whose social, economic, and political conditions have placed them in a disadvantaged position resulting in any one of the following situations:

"Absolute homelessness" (from a community perspective) is more likely to be described as those:

- who have no security of tenure beyond a thirty-day period;
- who suffer from family violence or family breakdown;
- who have no security of tenure, i.e. women and their children;
- who leave or flee family violence situation;
- who "couch surf" for a period of more than thirty days with no security of tenure;
- who are frequently involved in the street life;
- who are living in inadequate, substandard and/or unsafe accommodations that do not meet
 the minimal housing standards established by the United Nations or other local government
 agencies such as Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation;
- who rely on emergency shelters or shelters as primary residences;
- anyone released from a mental-health facility, or prison with no security of tenure;
- who are prevented from leaving a mental-health facility or prison because of a lack of security
 of tenure (including those women or men who are unable to have children returned to them by
 the Ministry of Child and Family Development for want of decent affordable housing);
- who flee their home and who have no security of tenure as a result of sexual abuse (regardless of age);
- who alternate between being sheltered and unsheltered (whether those shelters are hospitals, hostels, SRO, or otherwise); and/or
- who suffer from discrimination and who cannot hold security of tenure for any reasonable period of time as a result of such discrimination;



'At risk of homelessness" (from a community perspective) is more likely to be described as those:

- who pay more than 25 per cent of their income for accommodations;
- who suffer from acute life crisis such as: family violence, divorce, eviction, release from
- institutions that jeopardize their housing;
- who are at risk of losing their accommodations as a result of a lack of income,
- overcrowding, redevelopment, or unemployment
- whose income is below the Low-Income Cut-off;
- whose education level would place them in social distress or poverty below the Low-
- Income Cut-Off;
- who suffer from substance abuse, mental-illness, or those who suffer from structural
- and personal barriers that may lead to homelessness;
- who are denied an opportunity to acquire social housing to meet their socioeconomic
- needs
- who are hard to house for whatever reason;
- those whose income requires them to use food banks to supplement their income for
- prolonged periods of time;
- who are entrenched in the sex trade on the streets; and/or
- who, because of systemic barriers, are unable to acquire accommodation of any kind.

As in prior years, the 2023 Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver focused almost exclusively on "absolute homeless" individuals (all but long-term couch surfers) and excluded those who are "at risk of homelessness". This was a pragmatic decision, due mainly to three considerations:

- · the difficulty determining an effective count methodology,
- the cost involved in collecting accurate data, and
- the need to be consistent with previous homeless counts.

This decision is problematic from an Indigenous perspective, as it is difficult to segregate the issue of homelessness into finite boxes or categories. It also serves to under-report and mischaracterize the magnitude of Indigenous homelessness in Metro Vancouver. The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness characterizes the complexity of the issue:

The pathways into and out of homelessness are neither linear, nor uniform. Individuals and families who wind up homeless may not share much in common with each other, aside from the fact that they are extremely vulnerable and lack adequate housing, income and the necessary supports to ensure they stay housed. The causes of homelessness react in an intricate interplay between structural factors (poverty, lack of affordable housing), systems failures (people being discharged from mental health facilities, corrections or child protection services into homelessness) and individual circumstances (family conflict and violence, mental health and addictions). Homelessness is usually the result of the cumulative impact of these factors.

Thus, Indigenous homelessness is a facet of the broader issues of colonization, the legacy of the residential school system and the foster care system, intergenerational trauma, discrimination (both overt and systemic), poverty, health and housing inadequacy.

METHODOLOGY

'The 2023 Indigenous Homeless Count employed a methodology similar to past City of Vancouver and Metro Vancouver Regional Homeless Counts, although with funding autonomy, there are important methodological differences. Also, given the proportionally smaller number of participating Indigenous organizations as compared to the Metro Vancouver effort, some modifications were necessary.

In the planning stage, every effort was made to ensure a consistent approach with past Counts for comparison purposes.

The Count measured homelessness from 12:01 am to 11:59 pm on March 8th, 2023. In Metro Vancouver the Count consisted of one component to enumerate the sheltered homeless and another for the unsheltered homeless. For both components, volunteers used a prepared questionnaire that included screening questions and survey questions. These same questionnaires were used by mainstream Count teams.



TOBACCO TIES

For the second time, the Count employed a unique participation icebreaker - tobacco ties were provided instead of cigarettes. In the Indigenous community tobacco is considered a sacred medicine.

Within Indigenous communities, tobacco is used as an offering to the person conducting the ceremony or as an offering to the Creator. It is also used as a form of reciprocity, if you receive something you also give something. In this case, the tobacco ties were used as a welcome in exchange for one's time filling out a survey.

Leading up to the Count, the Indigenous community mobilized and produced over 7,000 ties. This process involved all IHSC organizations, elders and families, and was unifying and empowering for the community. This was a remarkable achievement considering the logistics involved and the three-month timeline for production.

The tobacco ties were well received by the homeless population regardless of heritage or ethnicity. It is the intention of the IHSC to permanently incorporate the tobacco ties into the count methodology.

COMMUNITY VOICEMAIL

Through Lu'ma Native BCH Housing Society, Community Voicemail was used to communicate with homeless individuals and members of the Indigenous community ahead of the Count with the goal of raising awareness and mobilizing community volunteers. Community Voicemail provides local phone numbers with voicemail to people who are homeless and/or phoneless, giving them the resources they need to connect to employment, housing and social service opportunities, as well as to stay in touch with their families. In the months leading up to the Count, voicemail bulletins were provided to community members, announcing the Count date and allowing an opportunity to participate.

GIFTS

To facilitate the Indigenous Count and mobilize community volunteers, gifts of \$150 were provided to each of the volunteers (for a 4-hour commitment including training). The volunteers were recruited by Indigenous organizations located regionally throughout Metro Vancouver.



MAGNET EVENTS

In addition to the use of volunteers walking a count route, the Indigenous community supported a number of magnet events across Metro Vancouver. In addition to the larger Magnet events, all participating organizations received a small budget to provide food to the homeless and transit tickets to Count volunteers. Each organization and magnet event offered food, promoted culture, provided logistical information and communicated the value of participation.

Regardless of the size of the event, the overall goal was to raise awareness, provide support, provide food, mobilize the community, and where appropriate, collect data. In retrospect, this series was very successful and empowering for those that participated.

DATA ANALYSIS AND LIMITATIONS

The information collected through the Count was synthesized by Homeless Services Association of BC and then returned to the IHSC for analysis. This report details the results of this process.

As in prior years, the Count was conducted in two ways – a shelter count and a street count. In the street count, most people were provided an opportunity to respond to survey questions. For the shelter count, in some cases this was not possible and so a head count was conducted without demographic information. As a result, the tables included in this report include a 'No Answer/Not Known' category and the calculations are based on known demographic data.

Regarding the Count itself, one of the challenges of conducting research on the experiences of poverty and marginalization is that everyone participating must focus on some of the most difficult realities of humanity, which may include: physical suffering, emotional and sexual abuse, social suffering, economic deprivation and structural injustices. This is often a very personal and emotional experience, particularly for the urban Indigenous homeless count participants in Metro Vancouver. Thus, it was imperative for the IHSC to act in a sensitive, respectful and culturally appropriate manner to support all individuals that participated in the Count, including staff, volunteers and individuals experiencing homelessness.





The 2023 Homeless Count shows clearly that Indigenous Peoples continue to remain overrepresented among the homeless population, and are 13 times more likely to be homeless than non-Indigenous individuals. Why is this so? Researchers have long acknowledged that the urban Indigenous Peoples face unique challenges. In addition to economic hardships, Indigenous Peoples may experience a range of barriers when trying to make a life in cities. These barriers are an extension of 150 years of discrimination and oppression that have resulted in physical and mental health issues, substance abuse, interpersonal violence and racism. Research shows that among Indigenous Peoples, education and training levels are typically lower, incarceration rates are higher, children in care rates are higher and unemployment rates are higher. As a result, incomes are lower than those of the non-Indigenous Peoples.

IMPACT OF RACIAL, CULTURAL AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

Race is not a biological fact but rather a socially constructed concept that was created and is maintained to establish disparities in the distribution of resources and power. There is only one race, the human race, and talking of multiple races is divisive. Clearly, racism has influenced the political, economic and cultural circumstances of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, where race-based colonizing powers attempted to socially isolate, culturally assimilate, and politically decimate Indigenous Peoples as a way of rationalizing colonialism. Racism at a structural level, rooted in political actions and policies, goes beyond the individual and informs institutions that perpetuate racism. Legally sanctioned discrimination has hindered opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to be self-determining and the harm done over generations is immeasurable.

This naturalized racism stemming from colonialism continues to influence how Indigenous Peoples are viewed and treated and limits opportunities, and in particular challenges the ability to secure adequate and affordable housing. Housing discrimination occurs when a person is denied equal access to housing, or full enjoyment of housing, for reasons that are not related to their merit as a tenant or homeowner.xii Numerous studies indicate that Indigenous Peoples encounter housing market discrimination as renters, as owners, and as prospective renters or owners. xiii



Housing discrimination has a range of effects including homelessness, overcrowding, higher rents, fewer options with respect to location, more frequent moves, and negative effects on health, education and employment.xiv Segregated and marginalized, it is difficult for urban Indigenous Peoples to connect with culturally appropriate, local services.

IMPACT OF INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Increasing evidence from the growing number of mental health studies conducted in Indigenous communities suggests that intergenerational trauma is a critical contributor to an array of personal, family, and community behaviors.*v

The historical context of Canadian social policy has been instrumental in creating institutions that have attempted to eradicate Indigenous world views and value systems that have existed for thousands of years and replace them with ideological systems that continue to undermine life for Indigenous Peoples. **vi* For example*, when Canada first became a country in 1867 with the passage of the British North America Act, Indigenous Peoples and lands reserved for Indigenous Peoples became controlled by the Federal government. Soon after Confederation, the Federal government established the Indian Act in 1876 as a coordinated approach to the policy of assimilation and when British Columbia entered Confederation, it did so on the agreement with that as a province it did not have to respect Indigenous rights.

The effects of personal trauma have been handed down from one generation to the next and continue unabated as expressed through symptoms such as homelessness, foster care, addictions, mental health and medical issues.

IMPACT OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

The Canadian government continued to use other mechanisms, including religion, to convert and assimilate Indigenous Peoples. Residential schools were among the most aggressive efforts by the Canadian government to assimilate Aboriginal Peoples.

Residential schools for Indigenous People in Canada date back to New France, although the current use of the term refers to schools established after Confederation in the 1870s. Over 140 federally run residential schools were located across the country, and the last school closed in 1996 in Saskatchewan. These government-funded, church-run schools were set up to eliminate parental involvement in the physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual development of Indigenous children.

During this era, more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were placed in these schools often against their parents' wishes. Most were forbidden to speak their language and practice their own culture. Many disappeared during this period. Unmarked graves are being found across Canada and the number of impacted children has yet to be quantified. While there are an estimated 80,000 former students living today, the ongoing impact of residential schools has been felt throughout generations and has contributed to social problems that continue to exist.xvii

IMPACT OF CHILD WELFARE AND FOSTER CARE POLICIES

When the residential schools began to close, child welfare and the foster care system effectively became the government's new assimilation policy. It is through provincial child welfare legislation and social policy that an overwhelming number of Indigenous children are

removed from their homes and communities by child welfare authorities and placed in foster care or made Crown wards^{xviii} both at the provincial and federal levels.

Even today, most Indigenous Peoples consider child welfare and the foster care system a vehicle to assimilate them into Canadian mainstream society. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission concluded in 2015 that more Indigenous children are placed in foster care each yearxix than attended residential school in any one year. Forced to assume the values of another culture that scorns their own belief system, Indigenous children are left in a cultural vacuum, relating neither to mainstream culture nor to their own community. Thus, historically, social policies have affected multiple generations of Indigenous Peoples. The severing of family, community and nation has left a legacy of traumatized individuals who frequently experience identity issues and who are often unable to make the most of their own abilities.**

The link between foster care and homelessness is documented in a 2016 study that showed that three out of every five homeless youth were part of the child welfare system at some point in their lives, a rate almost 200 times greater than that of the general population. Of those with a history in the child welfare system, almost two of every five respondents eventually "aged out" of provincial or territorial care, losing access to the sort of support that could have kept them from becoming homeless.xxi

The physical, sexual, mental, and emotional abuse experienced and/or witnessed by generations of children has left a significant number of Indigenous Peoples with a variety of mental health conditions. This in turn has affected the ability of Aboriginal Peoples to achieve balance in regards to their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. When experienced by more than one generation, personal trauma has become institutionalized within families. This reality also creates an inherent vulnerability to further abuse.xxii

As adults, former residential school students and child welfare system survivors have lost culture and language and many have lost connection to their traditional territories and demonstrate symptoms of anxiety disorders, alcohol and substance abuse, depression, suicide, and low self-esteem that are significantly higher than that found in the general population.xxiii It is important to acknowledge that the impact of these policies still affects generations of Indigenous Peoples today. Unfortunately, the legacy will inevitably continue for generations to come.

IMPACT OF MIGRATION

Large segments of the Indigenous community move fluidly between their home communities and the urban environments in Metro Vancouver. Most reserves offer limited education and employment opportunities and insufficient, poorly funded services. While it is widely believed that the Federal government's fiduciary responsibility to Indigenous Peoples applies to all Indigenous Peoples regardless of whether they live on or off reserve, disparate policies and inadequate funding at the federal and provincial levels do not meet these obligations.

As a result of the migration, urban Indigenous communities represent some of the largest and fastest growing Indigenous communities in Canada. Although moving from a reserve to a city appears to offer benefits including increased access to social, economic, and

educational resources, this population, as a whole, has not reached the same levels of socioeconomic status and well-being as the rest of the urban population.xxiv

Further, as migration occurs towards the urban centres, existing community support networks (social and financial) are eroded until new networks are established – this takes time and puts individuals at significant risk. In particular, this increases the likelihood of homelessness as individuals seek accommodation when moving from their home community to the city.xxv

IMPACT OF ECONOMIC DISCRIMINATION

Indigenous Peoples also experience economic discrimination in securing adequate and affordable housing in cities, as either renters or owners. **xvi* The housing selection process includes credit history checks, which automatically excludes many Indigenous Peoples who often lack any credit history. **xvii* From another perspective, across Canada, the proportion of urban Indigenous Peoples who own or rent homes is lower than those in the non-Indigenous population. **xviii* This supports the conclusion that homelessness disproportionately affects Indigenous Peoples regardless of where they reside in Canada.

IMPACT OF THE COST OF HOUSING IN METRO VANCOUVER

Metro Vancouver is one of the most unaffordable cities for housing in the world, adding to the systemic economic disadvantage facing Indigenous Peoples. According to an annual international study, Vancouver ranks 3rd in the 2023 Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey. **xi** As in all previous surveys, Vancouver is rated as having the worst housing affordability in Canada and is deemed 'severely unaffordable' in the study. Even more concerning, according to the survey, since 2004 Vancouver "has experienced the greatest housing affordability deterioration among major markets.***XXX** One can conclude that if obtaining housing is difficult for the non-Aboriginal population, systemic economic disadvantage and discrimination makes is far more difficult for Aboriginal Peoples.

IMPACT OF CHANGING GOVERNMENT POLICY

Mass modern homelessness in Canada emerged in the 1980s, following a massive federal government disinvestment in affordable housing in 1983 and structural shifts in the economy and reduced spending on social supports. Since then, organizations across Canada have tried and tested solutions to address the issue.xxxi These responses, largely based on the provision of emergency services, have not resulted in meaningful progress, as evidenced by the increasing numbers of homeless people identified in the Counts.

While the newly elected Federal government has renewed its interest in housing and homelessness by providing valuable short-term funding to reverse the historical disinvestment in affordable housing, and the 2016 federal budget committed \$2.3 billion over two years in affordable housing through various channels, its policy only includes an emphasis on the Housing First approach.

Housing First, while a progressive and ambitious program, does not work well for the Indigenous Community in Metro Vancouver. The cost of housing is so expensive that the federal dollars contributed only serve a very few individuals. There are simply not enough housing options available for the Indigenous community. Further, the Housing First definition of homelessness includes only those individuals who are absolutely homeless and excludes those

who are at-risk of homelessness. As a result, services are severely restricted and cannot be provided to everyone who needs them in the Indigenous community. This program makes people homeless before it can help.

Further, no new housing funding was added in Metro Vancouver. Dollars were generated by cannibalizing existing support programs that had been in place for years. These programs were full spectrum and were very effective at supporting Aboriginal People in acute homeless distress. Added to the fact that Aboriginal organizations continue to struggle with successfully applying for Housing First funding, the effective elimination of these programs has actually reduced the capacity of the Metro Vancouver Indigenous Community to serve its clients.

IMPACT OF THE HIDDEN HOMELESS

According to the State of Homelessness in Canada 2013 report, as many as 50,000 Canadians may be 'hidden homeless' on any given night. XXXIII Often referred to as couch surfing, this includes people who are temporarily staying with friends, relatives or others because they have nowhere else to live and no immediate prospect of permanent housing. This is a very tenuous housing option because couch surfers often put their hosts at risk of eviction as most landlords do permit long-term guests. There is no reliable data on the hidden homelessness in Canada at the national level and very little at the community level. In the Aboriginal community, this problem has reached epidemic proportions, with most community members considering this a normal and acceptable circumstance. For many years, researchers have aspired to gain a better sense of the magnitude of this effect on the Indigenous community. However, to date, one can only speculate the impact that this form of homelessness has on individuals.

At the end of the day, the Indigenous community is struggling to survive in an environment where all types of housing are unaffordable and the cost of living continues to climb. The Homelessness Count affirms this reality. The trend continues to worsen and the impact of homelessness on Indigenous Peoples is disproportionally pronounced.



CONCLUSION

The Indigenous homeless situation in Metro Vancouver continues to reflect the national crisis. In support of this fact, the mayors of Canada's largest cities first declared homelessness within our country "a national disaster" in 1998 and the United Nations declared homelessness in Canada a "national emergency" in 2007.xxxiii Some sources have suggested that Indigenous homelessness in major urban areas ranges from 20 to 50 percent of the total homeless population,xxxiv while others have reported that the range may be much wider – from 11 to 96 percent.

As a society, we can do better, and we must do better. Not only is there a higher proportion of Indigenous Peoples who are homeless, but they clearly face additional barriers in securing safe and affordable housing. In addition to the overall lack of safe, affordable housing across Canada, these barriers include issues related to: poverty and income inequality, health, low income, prejudice, racism, discrimination, justice, and displacement from their home communities.

These realities offer insight into why Indigenous Peoples are over represented among the homeless population and should be essential considerations in any path forward. Trauma, in particular, has emerged as a central theme in much of the literature on Indigenous homelessness and many articles about Indigenous Peoples lead with this discussion to provide a contextual backdrop.xxxvi

"This is not a situation that can be ignored any further. More resources than what are currently being provided need to be directed to the Indigenous community by all levels of government to address this unacceptable situation," says David Wells, Chair, Indigenous Homelessness Steering Committee.

Housing inadequacy and poverty in homelessness can largely be attributed to social, systemic and historical factors. **xxvii Indigenous-specific strategies towards healing and moving forward**xxviii and the broader struggle for self-determination and other forms of political justice for Indigenous Peoples must be considered in addressing systemic racial discrimination and improving the socio-economic status and well-being of Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

The COVID-19 pandemic has left the rental and housing markets in a state of uncertainty. The pandemic continues to contribute to historic unemployment levels across Canada, with service providers predicting a significant increase for housing support needs. It is well known that the pandemic disproportionately impacted Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized populations, and the impact is yet to be fully understood.

While it is laudable to set an aspirational goal to eliminate homelessness for all, it is important to understand that Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately impacted. This is evidenced by the 2023 Count results. Greater investment in regards to culturally appropriate services, supports and funding is required to create parity and address this deficit. Clearly greater efforts are needed by all levels of government to ensure that Indigenous Peoples experience homelessness at least proportionately to mainstream society.



SOURCES & CREDITS

- Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, "Canadian Definition of Homelessness", 2012. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/.
- http://www.urbancenter.utoronto.ca/pdfs/elibrary/UNNS_Aboriginal_Homelessn.pdf
- Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, "Canadian Definition of Homelessness", 2012. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/.
- http://traditionalnativehealing.com/tobacco-prayer-ties
- vi Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- Hanselmann, C. (2001). *Urban Aboriginal People in Western Canada: Realities and Policies*. Calgary: Canada West Foundation. Retrieved from: http://cwf.ca/pdfdocs/publications/September2001-Urban-Aboriginal-People-inWestern-Canada-Realitiesand-Policies.pdf
- Peters, E. J. (2012). 'I Like to Let Them Have their Time'. Hidden Homeless First Nations People in the City and Their Management of Household Relationships. *Social & Cultural Geography*, 13(4), 321-338.
- ix Ibid.
- http://www.nccahcnsa.
 ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/103/understanding_racism_EN_web.pdf
- http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/AboriginalLiteratureReview.pdf
- Cohen, I. M., & Corrado, R. R. (2004). Housing Discrimination Among a Sample of Aboriginal People in Winnipeg and Thompson, Manitoba. In J. P. White, P. Maxim & D. Beavon (Eds.), Aboriginal Policy Research: Setting the Agenda for Change, Vol. 1. (pp.113-126). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.
- http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/AboriginalLiteratureReview.pdf
- Cohen, I. M., & Corrado, R. R. (2004). Housing Discrimination Among a Sample of Aboriginal People in Winnipeg and Thompson, Manitoba. In J. P. White, P. Maxim & D. Beavon (Eds.), Aboriginal Policy Research: Setting the Agenda for Change, Vol. 1. (pp.113-126). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, Inc.
- Menzies, P. (2007) Understanding Aboriginal Intergeneration Trauma from a Social Work Perspective, The Canadian Journal of Native Studies, Toronto, Ont., Canada, XXVII, 2: 367-392
- xvi Ibid
- xvii http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=4
- xviii Ibid
- http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/residential-schools-to-blame-for-problemsplaguingaboriginals-truth-and-reconciliation-commission/wcm/6f351af9-b44d-4bf9-864cd0435bb249a6
- xx Ibid.
- Nichols, N., Schwan, K., Gaetz, S., Redman, M., French, D., Kidd, S., O'Grady, B. (2017). Child Welfare and Youth Homelessness in Canada: A Proposal for Action. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press., http://homelesshub.ca//childwelfare
- http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/residential-schools-to-blame-for-problems-plaguingaboriginals-truth-and-reconciliation-commission/wcm/6f351af9-b44d-4bf9-864cd0435bb249a6

- Menzies, P. (2007) Understanding Aboriginal Intergeneration Trauma from a Social Work Perspective, The Canadian Journal of Native Studies, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, XXVII, 2: 367-392
- http://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/AboriginalLiteratureReview.pdf
- Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- Walker, R. C. (2003). Engaging the Urban Aboriginal Population in Low-cost Housing Initiatives: Lessons from Winnipeg. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12(1), S99-S118.
- Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- xxviii Ibid.
- xxix By Chad Pawson, CBC News. Posted: Jan 22, 2017 8:41 PM PT. Last Updated: Jan 23, 2017 10:17 AM PT.
- http://www.demographia.com/dhi.pdf
- http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/SOHC2016.pdf
- Gaetz, S., Donaldson, J., Richter, T., and Gulliver, T. (2013). The State of Homelessness in Canada 2013. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- Leach, A. (2010). The Roots of Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada. *Parity*, 23(9), 12-13.
- Walker, R. C. (2003). Engaging the Urban Aboriginal Population in Low-cost Housing Initiatives: Lessons from Winnipeg. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 12(1), S99-S118.
- Belanger, Y. D., Weasel Head, G., & Awosoga, O. (2012b). Assessing Urban Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness in Canada. Final Report prepared for the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) and the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI), Ottawa, Ontario. Retrieved from: http://homelesshub. ca/resource/homelessness-urbanaboriginal-people-and-need-national-enumeration
- Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- Patrick, Caryl. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.
- xxxviii Ibid
- The federal and provincial governments need to develop a consistent, inclusive age definition of youth in Canada. Currently, different government departments use different definitions.

 Statistics Canada appears to have the most inclusive definition that includes youth up to the age of 28.
- Nichols, N., Schwan, K., Gaetz, S., Redman, M., French, D., Kidd, S., O'Grady, B. (2017). Child Welfare and Youth Homelessness in Canada: A Proposal for Action. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press., http://homelesshub.ca//childwelfare





Thank You

to our Funding Partner for helping us to create this report



This project is funded by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy



Lu'ma Native Housing Society