

# Housing First for youth providers



Presented by the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy

## 2014 session proceedings



## Executive Summary

Youth homelessness differs from adult homelessness because of the developmental considerations that must be incorporated in effective youth homelessness interventions. A homeless young person's primary goal of transition is not simply from homelessness to independent living but from youth to adulthood. Their experience of homelessness is also typically punctuated by a disconnection from the supports that are typically needed to make this transition. As a result of these differences, both definitions of youth homelessness, and how we conceive Housing First interventions for youth, must incorporate youth-specific considerations.

Throughout the summer of 2014, providers serving homeless youth met to discuss how understandings of youth homelessness can be best incorporated into Housing First services for youth. These conversations occurred within the context of the upcoming Housing First funding to be provided through the Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

As youth providers examined their practices it was discovered that there are many alignments between their existing practices and the recommendations for delivering Housing First for youth. They understand and regularly incorporate youth specific considerations into their service delivery including managing age and maturity, providing youth specific isolation, understanding potential impacts of housing on experiences of isolation and the need to incorporate Housing First within a broader model of youth homelessness interventions. Youth providers also demonstrated familiarity with the engagement principles associated with Housing First. They did identify some concerns with how the Housing First principle of choice is best managed with youth but the fewer number of examples of youth Housing First that are documented limited the capacity to answer some of these questions based on available evidence.

While youth providers seem to have a natural alignment with many of the considerations of Housing First, many continued to communicate hesitancy about the ability to successfully deliver Housing First under the current funding model provided under the Homelessness Partnering Strategy. It is suggested that these hesitations may reflect their experience of the limitations in the current funding paradigm to effectively address the unique issues found in youth homelessness.

## Acknowledgement

Many thanks to Jennifer Morrison of Covenant House Vancouver for her substantial partnership in this project. Her record of the proceedings laid the foundation for this summary report. She has also improved the readability, accessibility and usefulness of this document through her time spent editing and providing feedback to create the final draft.



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## Session Objectives

The youth Housing First sessions were developed to help youth service providers within Metro Vancouver attain a better understanding of Housing First principles. A primary focus of these sessions was to develop a consensus between youth services providers as to what Housing First entails from a youth services perspective.

In addition to providing information on general Housing First principles and practices, these sessions sought to highlight the differences between youth and their adult counterparts, and attempt to create a working definition of youth homelessness and Housing First within the Metro Vancouver context.

## Fundamental Concepts for Youth Housing First

Dr. Stephen Gaetz is one of the most prolific writers within Canada on the subject of youth homelessness and has developed a number of resources that outline some of the key differences between youth homelessness and adult homelessness.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> He proposes that the trajectory that a homeless youth must navigate is first a *transition to adulthood*, as a product of their life stage, followed by a transition to independence. In contrast, a direct transition to independence is generally encouraged for homeless adults. This distinction, essentially what is termed adolescence, is of primary importance in preparing youth for eventual independence. However, *family conflict* in its various forms is the typical precursor to youth homelessness; as such, homeless youth are interrupted in their development and *separated from the support systems* that would foster a transition from adolescence to adulthood. By nature of their age, homeless youth have *limited life skills and experience* to support a fully independent existence.

In response to these distinction, Gaetz advocates a focus on developmental considerations that differentiate youth from adults in service provision. This adjustment is highlighted in the recommendation of a youth development focus as part of the recovery orientation within the typical Housing First principles:

Standard Housing First Principles	Youth Housing First Principles
Immediate Access to Housing with No Housing Readiness Requirements	Immediate Access to Housing with No Housing Readiness Requirements
Consumer Choice and Self-Determination	Consumer Choice and Self-Determination
Recovery Orientation	<b>Positive Youth Development Orientation</b>
Individualized and Person-Driven Supports	Individualized and Person-Driven Supports
Social and Community Integration	Social and Community Integration

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<sup>1</sup> Gaetz, S. (2014). *Coming of Age: Reimagining the Response to Youth Homelessness in Canada*. Toronto: The Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.

<sup>2</sup> Gaetz, & Scott, F. (2012). *Live, Learn, Grow: Supporting Transitions to Adulthood for Homeless Youth – A Framework for the Foyer in Canada*. Toronto: The Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.

<sup>3</sup> Gaetz, S. (2014). *A Safe and Decent Place to Live: Towards a Housing First Framework for Youth*. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.

<sup>4</sup> Gaetz, S, O’Grady, B, Buccieri, K, Karabanow, J & Marsolais, A (Eds.). (2013). *Youth Homelessness in Canada: Implications for Policy and Practice*. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.

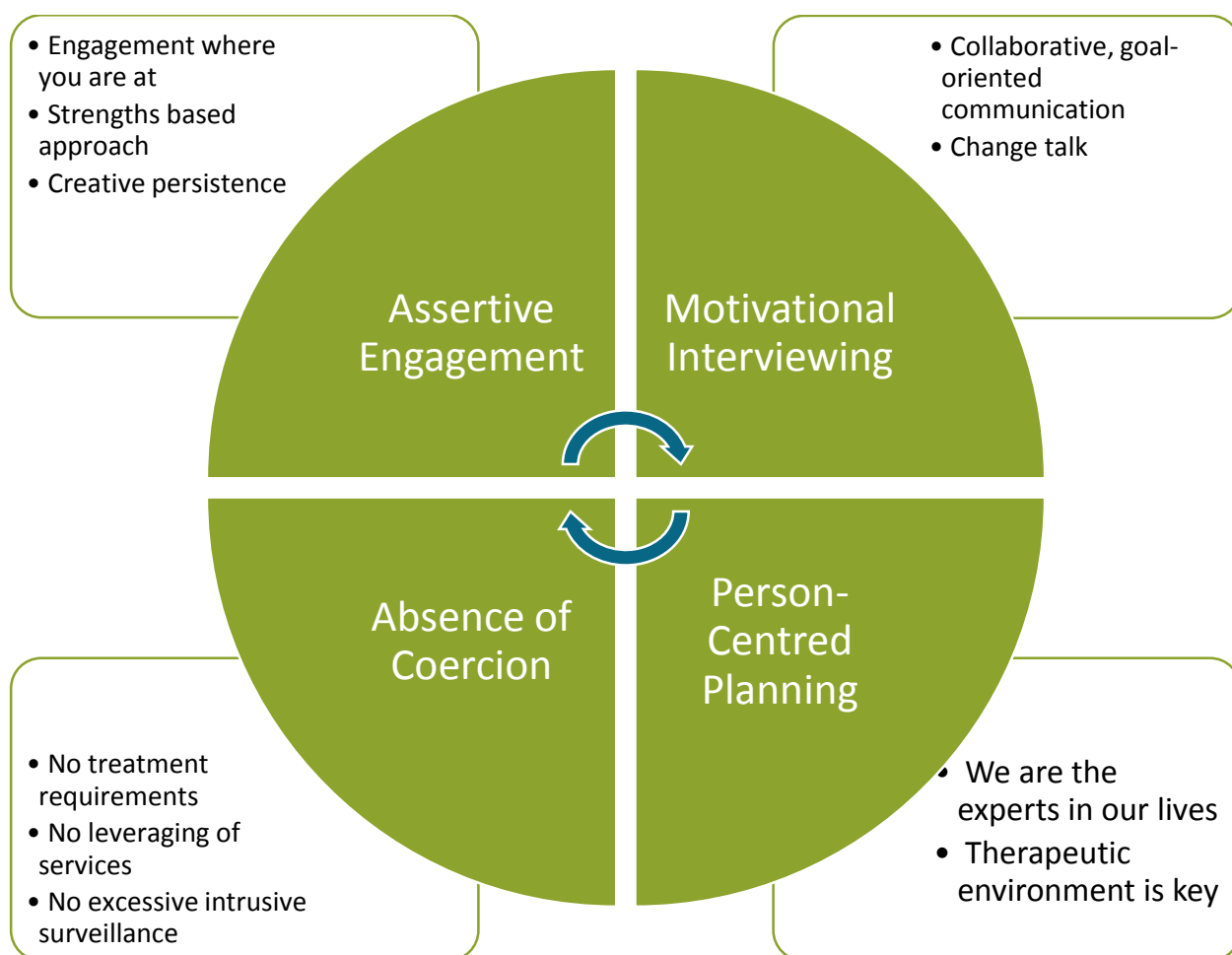


## Session Findings

### Alignment with Current Practices

#### Housing First Case Management/Engagement Principles

A Housing First approach includes Assertive Engagement, Motivational Interviewing, Person-Centred Planning and an Absence of Coercion as core elements of its approach to case management and engagement. These practices are intended to be utilized concurrently to deliver a self-reinforcing engagement strategy that promotes freedom of choice and an environment conducive to change.



Youth providers attending these sessions demonstrated themselves to be well versed with many of the concepts within this model. These concepts include **motivational interviewing**, engaging in a manner that is **strengths based**, and **promoting a youth's ownership in decision-making**

Youth providers did identify some areas in which they felt there might be a disconnection between current practices and the existing service environment:

*Behaviour management that is primarily bounded by a therapeutic limit setting framework may not align with the developmental stage of youth*

Youth providers expressed concern that a homeless young person will most likely experience deficits in risk assessment and self-management skills. There was concern that a youth may not always possess sufficient levels of self-management to utilize a behavioural management strategy that encourages the

autonomy of the youth in a predominantly unstructured environment. This may also not mirror the structure of authority that is found for youth within the general population that follow a more typical developmental trajectory; for example, many youth experience interventions (at the discretion of caring adults) that occur for their own safety and in their own best interests, even when it is against their wishes.

It was also recognized that limited examples of a fully implemented Housing First approach for youth has not allowed for a thorough exploration of the balance of autonomy and structure in youth services. This is particularly challenging in regard to youth with risk-taking tendencies or poor impulse control who may in fact thrive in a more structured environment. It was also acknowledged that this may be an area of further consideration and study for those who decide to pursue a Housing First approach with youth.

*Creative persistence that has a broad scope for learning through decision making may not align with the priorities of all other stakeholders*

Youth providers identified that a perspective that allows youth to make mistakes within their housing journey and to use these mistakes as learning opportunities may not be encouraged by all stakeholders. Providers felt that further work would be required for any youth who was in care to ensure that this approach could be fully understood and supported by staff with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. It was of note to the group that youth should have access to varying points within the housing continuum, according to their needs and developmental progress. Additionally, this access should be non-linear to account for setbacks or environmental changes that both homeless youth and youth within the general population often experience.

### Positive Youth Development Orientation

It is suggested that the following developmental considerations be made when implementing a Housing First program for youth<sup>3</sup>:

- **Age and maturity** – For many young people (particularly those 18 and under) the burden of running one's own household may be overwhelming.
- **Potential isolation** – Some young people fear the alienation that may occur if they are placed in scattered site housing without strong social and community supports.
- **Legal issues** – Getting access to insured housing is a challenge in some jurisdictions. In addition, age-mandated differences in terms of supports (mental health, child protection, eligibility for income support, etc.) can complicate implementation of support models.
- **Length of supports** – Because of issues relating to the nature of adolescent development and the time it takes to mature into an independent adult, young people may need basic supports for longer periods of time than structured Housing First programs allow.
- **Youth appropriate supports** – The range, underlying philosophy and service delivery model must necessarily be youth appropriate and based on the needs of adolescents and emerging adults. It is also recognized that in accessing housing, for instance, young people may experience age discrimination.
- **Trust building** – Because many young people have difficulty forming attachments due to trauma experienced in their childhood and youth, it takes time to establish the meaningful relationships necessary to help them access the supports they need.
- **Housing First is one of many key interventions** – Responses to youth homelessness must also include preventive strategies, early intervention options (including family reconnection and host homes) and a range of accommodation and support options.



Again, existing perspectives and practices of youth providers aligned with a number of these principles:

*Age and maturity are regular considerations when working with youth*

Youth providers recognize that a youth’s stage of development impacts how they will work with that youth. This is an underlying feature of youth work; a feature as important as meeting a youth where they are at when they present for services. Youth providers also recognize that those who are homeless have experienced life events and trauma that may have delayed their development in particular areas (cognitive, social, etc.) so they may not have achieved the developmental milestones considered normal for their age. This understanding of a youth’s interrupted development will impact the assessment of their service needs within a Housing First approach.

**Youth Developmental Milestones<sup>5</sup>**

Developmental Area	Early Adolescence (10-13)	Middle Adolescence (14-16)	Late Adolescence (17-19)
<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Significant physical/sexual maturation</li> <li>▪ Intense concern with body image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continuing physical/sexual changes</li> <li>▪ Less concern with body image</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physical/sexual changes complete</li> <li>▪ Greater acceptance of physical appearance</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Concrete thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Growth of capacity to think abstractly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity for abstract thought in place</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Growing independence in decision/making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of sense of identity</li> <li>▪ Exploration of ability to attract partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sense of identity established</li> </ul>
<b>Social</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increasing influence of peers</li> <li>▪ Feeling attracted to others begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enormous influence of peers/ school environment</li> <li>▪ Increase in sexual interest</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family influence more in balance with peer influence</li> <li>▪ Serious intimate relationships begin to develop</li> <li>▪ Transition to work, college, independent living</li> </ul>
<b>Behavioural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Experimenting with new ways of behaving begins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Risk-taking behaviour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity for realistic risk assessment</li> </ul>

*Interventions should be developed to avoid potential isolation*

Youth providers within Metro Vancouver have conveyed their understanding of the potential benefit of congregate housing – the predominant service delivery model for youth housing within Metro Vancouver. They further recognize the potential benefits of housemates or house-sharing to address isolation issues.

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<sup>5</sup> National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. (1999). *Get Organized: A Guide to Preventing Teen Pregnancy*. Johnson and Johnson Family of Companies.



It was acknowledged that these models can be used within a Housing First approach, in conjunction with independent housing, as long as the young person's choice of housing directs where they are housed.

#### *Current housing models mirror foyer-type models support youth development*

Youth services in Metro Vancouver regularly mirror the evidenced-based, foyer-model of transitional housing advocated by Gaetz and Scott<sup>2</sup>. Services found within Vancouver youth housing models that are typically associated with the foyer-model include:

- Carefully conducted intake program to determine eligibility
- Client-centred case management
- Action plans for personal development
- Connections to life skills development
- Nurturing environments that support positive relationships
- Importance of education, training and work
- Connections to mental health supports
- Affordable program fees that support steps towards being self-sustaining

#### *Trust building is essential for successful service delivery*

Youth providers identified this as an essential component of service delivery. Homeless young people regularly come from environments that have taught them not to trust authority figures, and allowing space for trust building enhances the capacity of the service to support the youth. In addition, these relationships allow youth the opportunity to model positive decision-making, which continues to benefit them after services are discontinued.

Youth providers identified a number of areas that are promoted under the positive youth development orientation. Alternately, they communicated concerns regarding limitations within the current Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding parameters:

#### *Youth appropriate supports are linked to transitional housing:*

While the alignment with foyer-like services is supported by current research on youth homelessness, it has impacted the ease with which youth serving organizations can leverage their existing operations and enhance them under the current HPS funding. As transitional housing is not an eligible housing choice under HPS Housing First funding, youth providers must target funding only to permanent housing situations. Most youth providers do not have current capacity to provide this type of housing within their existing operations, or it is at odds with their current mandate. In addition, the suitability of permanent housing for youth was contested extensively.

#### *Length of supports may be currently time limited*

Currently most youth housing programs are time limited but providers expressed openness to increasing the age limit of their service mandate (typically 24 years of age). This mandate would also mean that for Housing First services to be fully implemented in a youth population, appropriate transition plans to adult services, for those that still need them, would be required.

#### *Developmental considerations may require increased supports and options*

There were some concerns that a young person who is more prone to risk-taking and peer influence, has not developed abstract thought, or struggles with cause and effect would be more likely to make decisions that would negatively impact their housing. As such, it was speculated that youth would likely require





more housing placements, which would become increasingly difficult with each placement. This would place added pressure on service providers to secure housing.

Youth providers also recognized that supporting a young person through developmental transition would typically take more personnel resources than what would be required for an adult to transition to independence. It was suggested that a Housing First approach would typically require a lower staff to client ratio than is provided within HPS funding limitations, a suggestion that is repeated in other reports of successful youth programs.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, the youth providers indicated, as is recognized within Gaetz's work, that young people are expected to experience more discrimination when attempting to gain housing. This further highlights the need for some housing options for youth that fall outside of the private market place.

#### *Current research on youth Housing First recommends it as one in a system of interventions*

Youth providers conveyed that the current limitations of HPS Housing First funding may hinder their efforts in combating youth homelessness by possibly restricting access to resources. While current research recommends that youth Housing First be partnered with prevention and early intervention strategies, eligible populations under HPS Housing First funding criteria are excluded from receiving these types of services. It is most desirable for youth serving organizations to engage with youth prior to them becoming chronically or episodically homeless. While it is recognized that these services can be implemented under non-Housing First funding, youth providers identified challenges with limiting the majority of funding to more adult-oriented service models. This could result in a less cost effective method to address youth homelessness, with a greater potential for harm to young people.

## Other HPS Considerations

## Youth Homelessness Definition

### Existing Definitions

Two definitions of youth homelessness were explored during the youth sessions.

“Youth homelessness is a sub-population of homelessness and refers to young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers and importantly, lack many of the social supports deemed necessary for the transition from childhood to adulthood. In such circumstances, they 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.”<sup>1</sup>

Key elements of this definition include:

- A specific age definition
- A description of the relationship to parents/caregivers
- A description of the key elements of youth homelessness
- A basis in a developmental approach to youth homelessness

The second definition described youth homelessness as:

“A homeless youth is an unaccompanied person aged 24 and under lacking a permanent night time residence. They can be living on the street, in shelters, couch surfing, in unsafe and insecure housing, and



living in abusive situations. They may also be about to be discharged without the security of a regular residence from a care, correction, health, or any other facility.”<sup>6</sup>

Key elements of this definition include:

- An age definition that only has an upper boundary
- A description of environments in which a youth could be living that constitutes homelessness, including abusive situations and discharge from institutions

## Proposed Typology

In complement to his proposed definition of youth homelessness, Gaetz further proposes a typology of youth homelessness based on a developmental approach.<sup>1</sup> This typology shares similarities with the typology that is used for adults (chronically, episodically and transitionally homeless), but bases its categories in terms of connection to home and other supports rather than the time spent homeless. In addition, the typology includes suggested interventions based on where the youth is categorized.

Category	Typical Presentation	Suggested Intervention
<b>Temporarily Disconnected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Homeless for a short period</li> <li>▪ Return with limited assistance</li> <li>▪ Younger, more stable family, likely to stay in school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prevention</li> <li>▪ Early intervention to divert from homelessness</li> </ul>
<b>Unstably Connected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Longer, repeated homelessness</li> <li>▪ School and employment challenges</li> <li>▪ Some family connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Family reconnection</li> <li>▪ Transitional housing programs</li> </ul>
<b>Chronically Disconnected</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Longest, more repeated homelessness</li> <li>▪ Increased mental health and addictions issues</li> <li>▪ Little or no family connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comprehensive interventions</li> <li>▪ Supportive housing</li> <li>▪ Longer-term housing programs</li> </ul>

## Vancouver Definition Considerations

Youth providers examined the above definitions as well as the definitions of homelessness provided within the HPS Housing First funding definitions.

### Response to HPS Definition of Homelessness

HPS defines those who are homeless as, “Individuals who do not have a place of their own where they could expect to stay for more than 30 days and for which they paid rent.”

Youth providers identified a number of challenges with this definition in terms of successfully identifying young people who are homeless:

- It is possible for a young person to be appropriately housed and not pay rent, e.g. in the family/ foster home. Therefore, using ‘paying rent’ as part of the exclusionary criteria increases the difficulty for youth providers to distinguish periods of housing and periods of homelessness for a young person.

<sup>6</sup> Calgary Homeless Foundation. (2012). *Community Leadership. Calgary Homeless Foundation Annual Report, 2012.*

- Youth providers identified that youth under the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development are typically not identified as homeless while in care as a place has been provided for them. Youth providers identified concerns that this may not fully reflect the experience of the young person if they are regularly disconnected from a foster home or experience multiple placements in foster homes. As such, determining the authority on the assessment of homelessness for youth in or coming from care is necessary to effectively identify youth who are homeless or have a history of homelessness.
- Youth providers identified that accommodation of a month should not be identified as a period of housing as this is far too short to suggest a period of stability for the young person.

### Considerations for Metro Vancouver Definition of Youth Homelessness

Youth providers agreed that the inclusion of developmental considerations within a youth definition of homelessness is appropriate and so the Gaetz definition of homelessness was used as a framework for further discussion. While this was the case, youth providers acknowledged that many of the terms used within the Gaetz definition required further definition to fully flesh out the nuanced nature of youth homelessness. For example, providers identified that further clarification was needed for the phrase, “living independently of parents and/or caregivers” to demonstrate that connection with parents and caregivers may be intermittent or that while a regular connection may occur, the youth remains homeless because the family home is unsafe.

Other considerations, or areas that could be expounded in further definition, include:

- The need to reflect the differences in the experience and maturity of homeless young people, regardless of their age, and that these differences may not become apparent at initial assessment
- That consideration of developmental differences must be considered on a case by case basis, rather than an age basis, when making intervention decisions

On the whole, youth providers supported the Gaetz definition but identified the need for further work to refine the terms to ensure appropriate use by those who may be less familiar with the details of youth homelessness.

### Considerations for Metro Vancouver Definition of Youth Housing First

As previously referenced within this document, youth providers agreed that Housing First interventions must not be the only approach included in a response to youth homelessness. Interventions of prevention and early intervention must be considered, with appropriate considerations of repatriation to family homes. It is recognized that for some youth, a model that provides few limitations may be detrimental for some youth and not appropriate. This may be especially true for youth at the lower end of the age/development trajectory.

Youth providers also recognized that youth homelessness is by nature transitional. Because youth itself is transitional, it is not to be expected that a young person will remain in the same place indefinitely. This applies to youth who do not experience homelessness, and as such should extend to homeless youth as well. Youth programs, including Housing First, should be developed to respond to youth, recognizing that housing is likely not being built to support permanence but rather growth.

The conclusion of discussions with youth providers revealed that while the inclusion of a positive youth development orientation enhances the definition of youth Housing First, additional information and research is needed to determine how youth Housing First can be most effectively implemented.

## Session Evaluation

Three youth sessions were held to cover all material presented. This structure, including the material to be covered in each session, was developed in consultation with youth providers who participate in the Youth Table of the Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness.

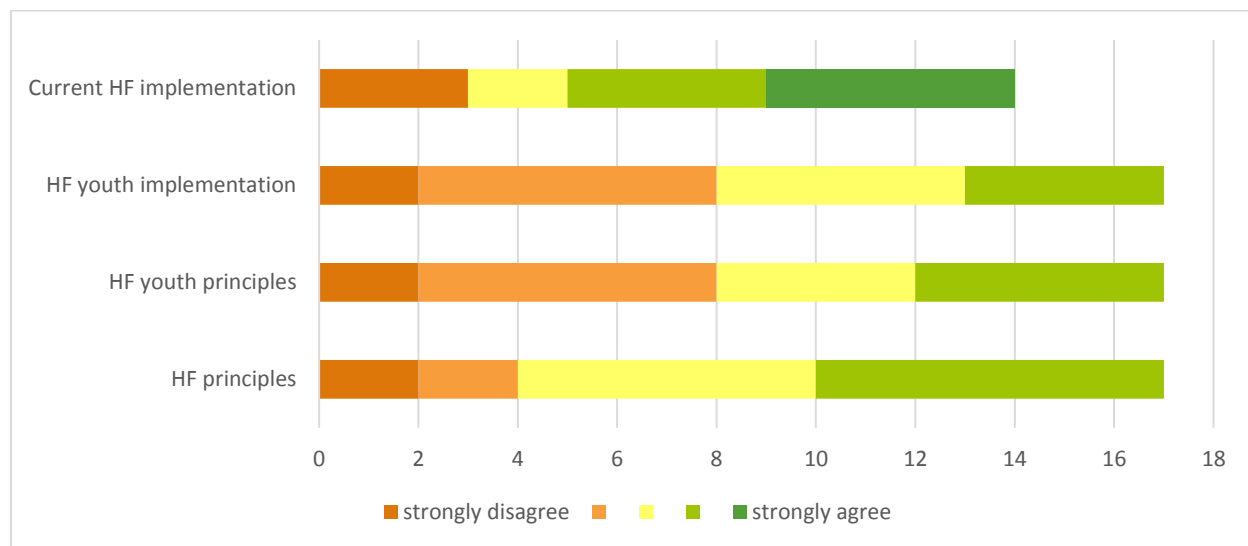
While some participants attended all sessions, some were only able to make one or two of the sessions. As such, those who responded to questionnaires were different for each session and end responses may not be fully matched with those who initially responded. Although this is the case, the results remain a true reflection of feedback received regarding the youth sessions.

### Session 1

Session 1 reviewed Housing First (HF) principles and highlighted the impacts of incorporating a positive youth development focus within a HF approach.

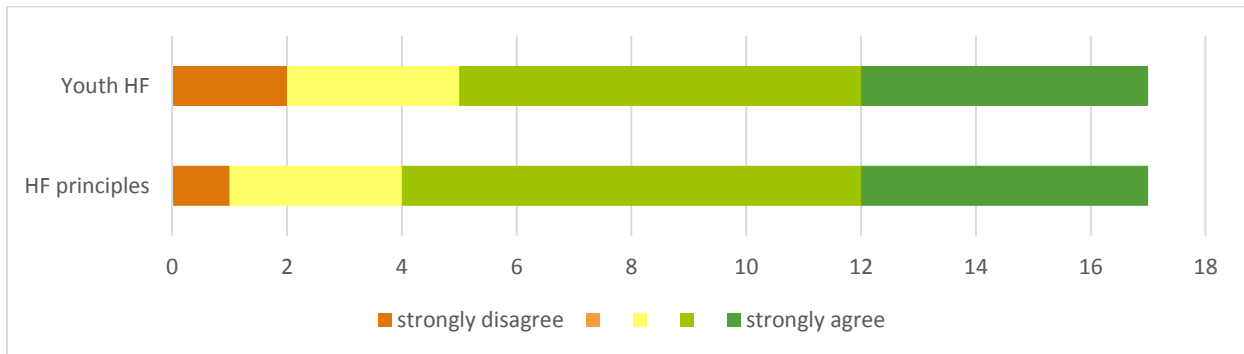
#### Participant Knowledge and Practice

While youth providers still had variation in their knowledge of HF, just over 40% of participants were in some agreement that they felt knowledgeable about HF practices. Youth providers indicated much less knowledge of youth specific HF principles (29%) and youth specific implementation (24%). Surprisingly, 64% of youth providers indicated that they were currently implementing HF practices in their organization. This may be a reflection of the various interpretations of HF practices and highlights the importance of consistencies in definitions of HF within the youth sector in Metro Vancouver. As a matter of interest, it is also noted that this level of current implementation is much higher than that indicated by adult providers (35%). This finding may actually support information presented in this resource that suggests that existing practices of youth providers leave them well aligned with HF principles.



## Session Impact

The majority of participants (71% to 76%) agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge increased regarding HF principles and the youth considerations for HF. It is acknowledged that the breakdown of the youth sessions into different information sessions meant that youth providers were very interested in understanding how the upcoming Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) funding would apply to youth. Comments within the session and in feedback indicated that this was a strong priority for the youth providers, with general agreement that it was appropriate to address this information within the proposed session schedule.

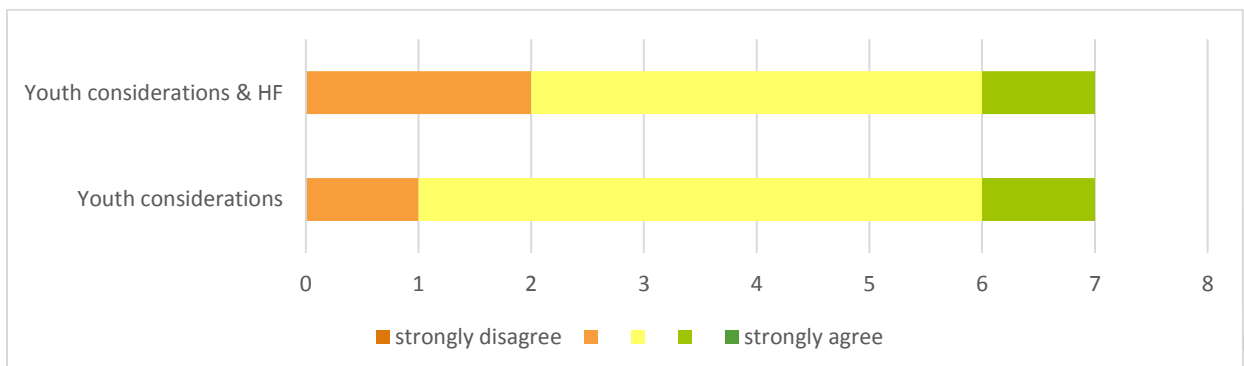


## Session 2

Session 2 reviewed the key issues associated with service to youth that must be considered when developing youth interventions. These included age and maturity, potential isolation, legal issues, length of supports, youth appropriate supports and HF as one of many approaches.

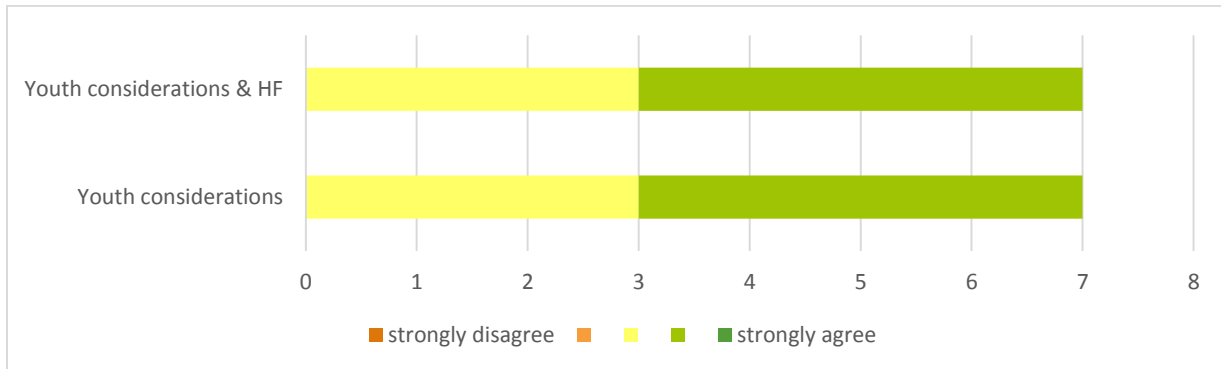
### Participant Knowledge and Practice

Participants indicated their agreement with, "I feel very knowledgeable about the types of service considerations that must be managed when providing youth services," and, "I feel very knowledgeable about how youth considerations interact with Housing First." The most common response from participants fell in the neither agree nor disagree range. It is noted that this range does suggest improvement in knowledge of how Housing First and youth considerations interact as the proportion of those who did not feel knowledgeable in this area substantially decreased (47% in Session 1 to 29% in Session 2).



## Session Impact

The majority (57%) of respondents indicated that they had some increase in knowledge of youth service considerations and how these interacted with HF. As has been previously noted, many providers indicated alignment between their current practices and youth service considerations.

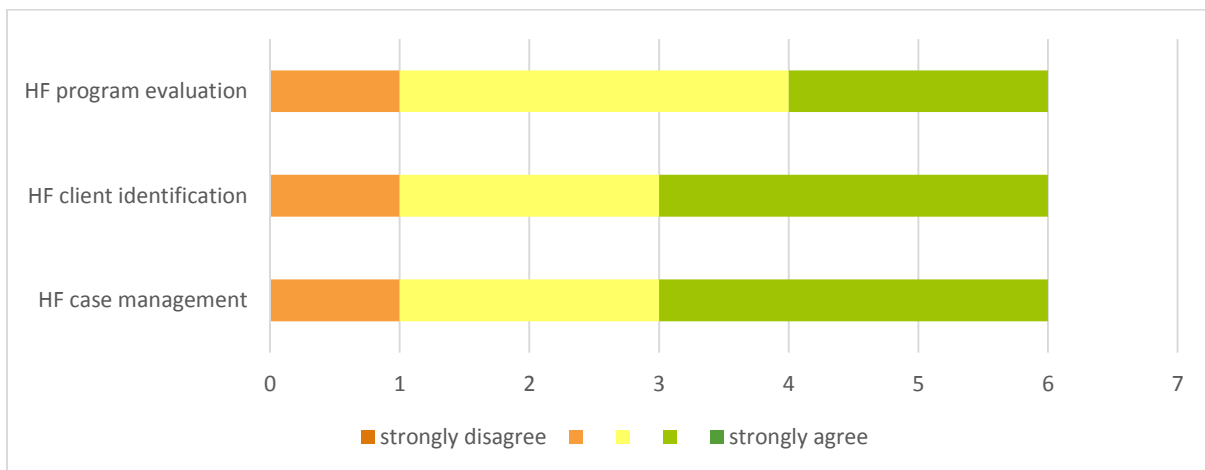


## Session 3

Session 3 reviewed the key elements of case management engagement within HF, client eligibility under HPS funding and HPS program evaluation requirements. In addition, time was taken to discuss definitions of youth homelessness and youth Housing First that appropriately reflect the knowledge and experience of Metro Vancouver providers.

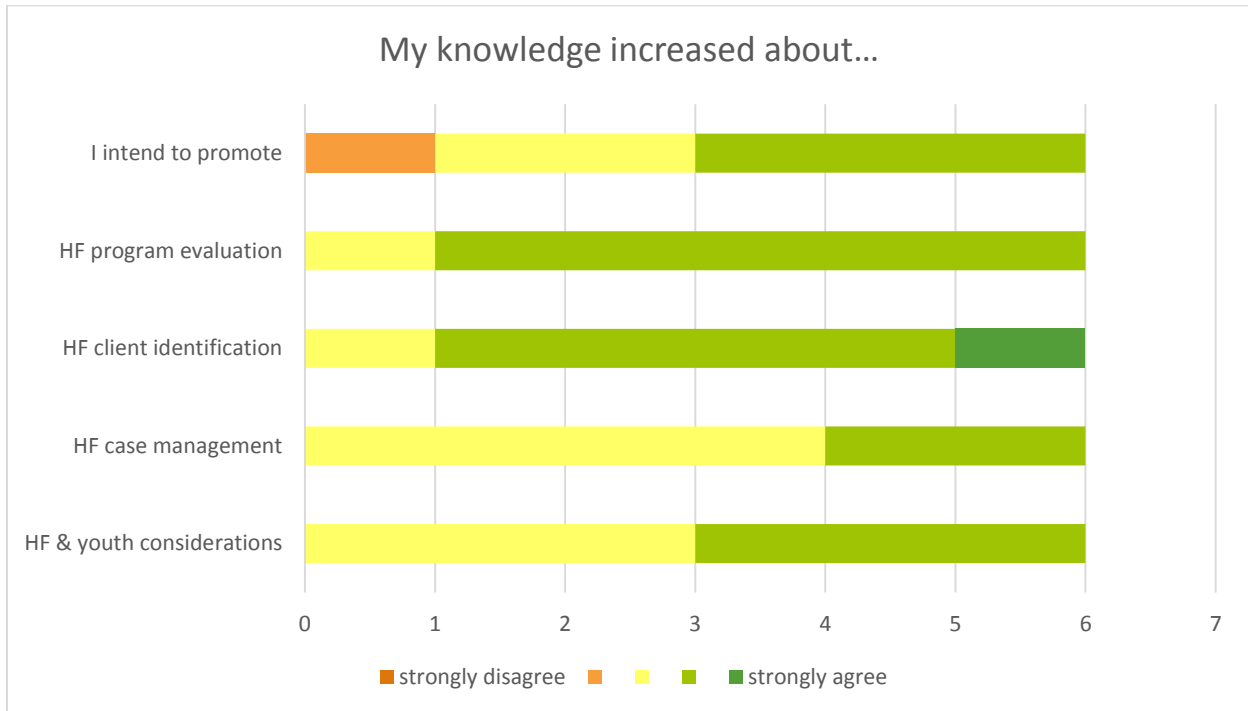
### Participant Knowledge and Practice

Respondents to the Session 3 questionnaire indicated a relatively high (50%) initial knowledge of HF case management principles and identification. Session discussions again indicated that HF case management principles are part of their existing practices. In addition, client eligibility requirements had been referenced throughout the previous two sessions, increasing the likelihood that participants had gained awareness of eligibility criteria.



## Session Impact

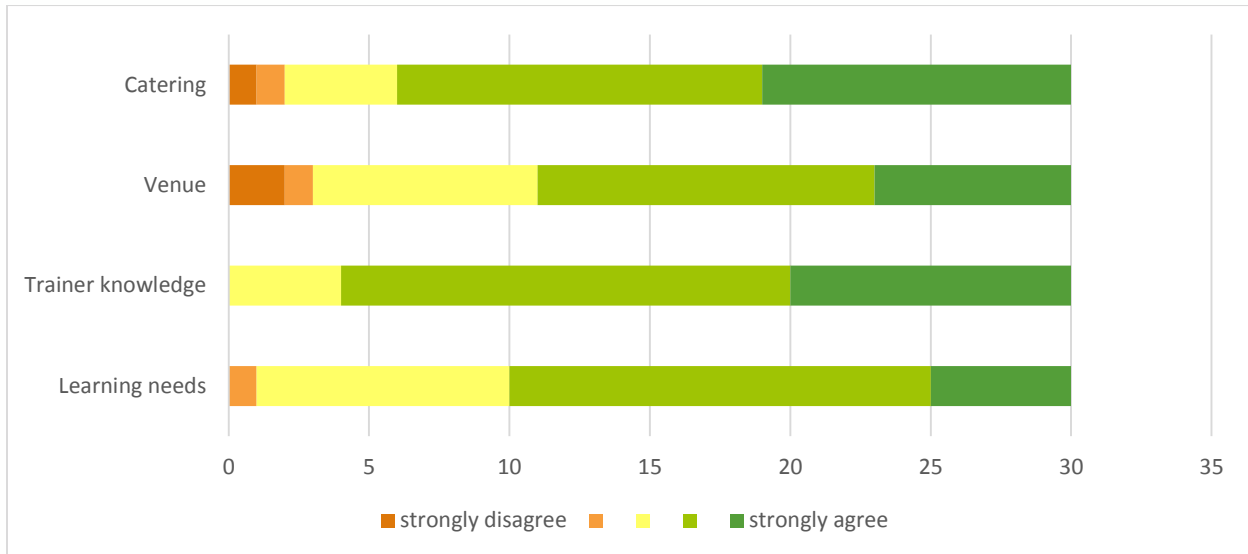
While participants indicated a reasonable level of knowledge of the content discussed in Session 3, they still indicated a general increase in knowledge about these areas. The two lowest areas were in HF case management (33%) and HF & youth considerations (50%). These findings are somewhat expected given that learning on youth considerations for HF has occurred incrementally across all sessions and that HF case management practices are often incorporated in the current practice of youth service providers.



Perhaps the most challenging finding is that only 50% of respondents intend to promote HF within their organizations as a result of these sessions. This is substantially lower than 78% of respondents within the adult sessions. Potential reasons for this finding are discussed further in the Final Reflections section of this report.

## Combined Session Content/Format Evaluation

Questions on the sessions met the participant's expectations with regards to learning objectives, trainer knowledge, venue and catering were asked at each session. All feedback was combined and is shown below. The majority of participants agreed that the trainer knowledge (87%) and the catering (80%) met their expectations.



When examining results related to meeting the learning needs of the participants it is noted that a number of participants indicated that they did not feel there was enough information available on HPS Housing First funding guidelines for youth, as indicated by comments such as:

- “A few critical details about youth definitions are missing.”
- “The process is overwhelming as to what is covered by funding and what is not.”
- “More questions to raise about funding eligibility.”

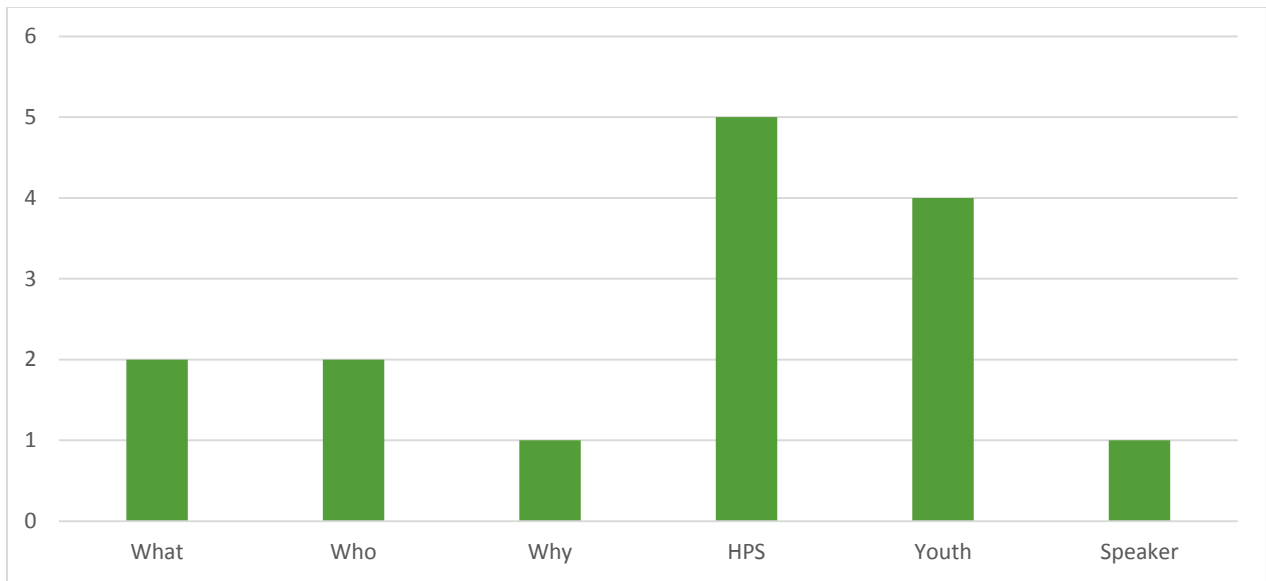
It is also noted that the decreased satisfaction with venues was primarily due to one venue that was indicated to be smaller than the group desired and experienced some recurring noise issues.

### “Most Important Learning”

Participants were asked, “What was the most important thing you learned today?” A total of 12 responses were then categorized into based on predominant responses as they related to session content. Comments could be included in more than one category if referenced in the comment.

- What: Housing First Principles
- Who: Client Eligibility
- HPS: Comments referencing details of HPS funding
- Youth: Comments referencing information specific to youth considerations
- Speaker: Vancouver Housing First's Speakers Bureau





When compared to feedback from the adult sessions, these results reveal a number of interesting findings.

- Details of the HPS funding was the most commonly reported ‘most important learning’ for youth providers. This differed from adult providers who indicated it as the third most important learning area, somewhat equal to the What and How (case management engagement in HF) categories.
- The absence of the How information as an important area of learning, especially when considering that this was identified as an important learning area for adult providers, supports the previous suggestion that youth providers currently incorporate principles of HF case management and engagement within their existing practices.

## Final Reflections

When considered as a whole within the context of all feedback from sessions, it would appear that when youth providers are examining their capacity to align with Housing First it will be funding criteria that is the critical factor. It would appear that the existing practices of the Metro Vancouver youth sector would allow them to align well with Housing First approaches, but that they may be limited by some of the requirements of the funding criteria.