



Housing First for *YOUTH*

Challenges in Going to Scale

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things
you need to
consider

1

Fidelity to the **Housing First**
for Youth model is essential



CLARITY

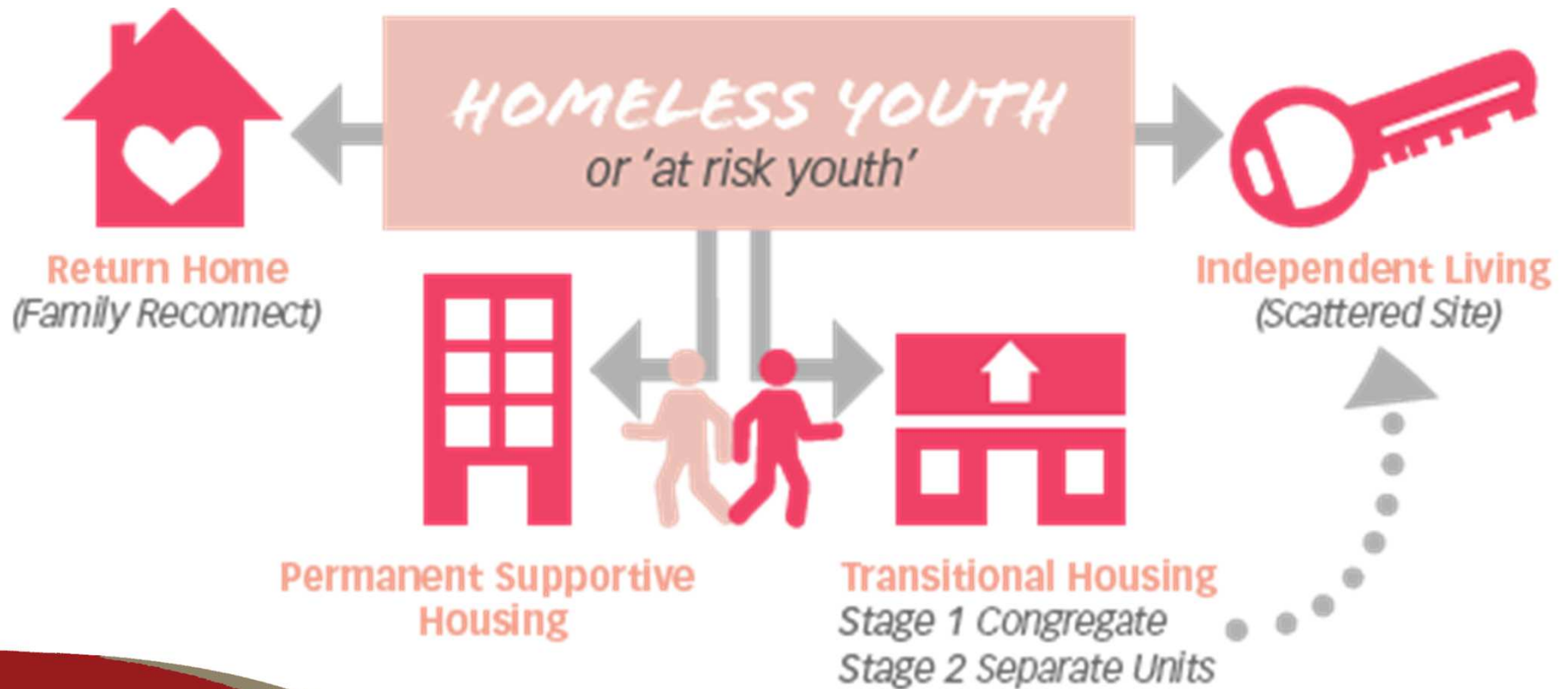
about what **Housing First** is,
is a crucial first step . . .

CORE PRINCIPLES

1. **Immediate access to housing with no preconditions.**
2. **Youth choice and self determination.**
3. **Positive youth development orientation.**
4. **Individualized and client-driven supports.**
5. **Social and community integration.**

ACCOMMODATION

Youth need different **Housing Options**



SUPPORTS



2

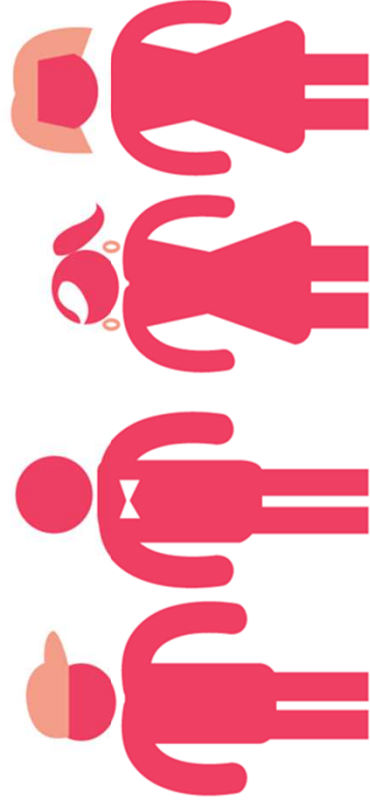
Necessity of adopting a **youth development** focus



Youth development

- A recognition of the **distinctive needs** of youth.
- A ***Positive Youth Development*** approach.
- Differentiation of approaches based on ***age***.
- Youth ***participation*** in solutions.

RATHER THAN MERELY FOCUSING ON RISK AND DEFICITS, A POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT APPROACH IS ASSET BASED AND INCORPORATES AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF THE DEVELOPING ADOLESCENT. IT MUST BUILD ON THE STRENGTHS, TALENTS AND DREAMS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND WORK TOWARDS ENHANCING PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND RESILIENCE.

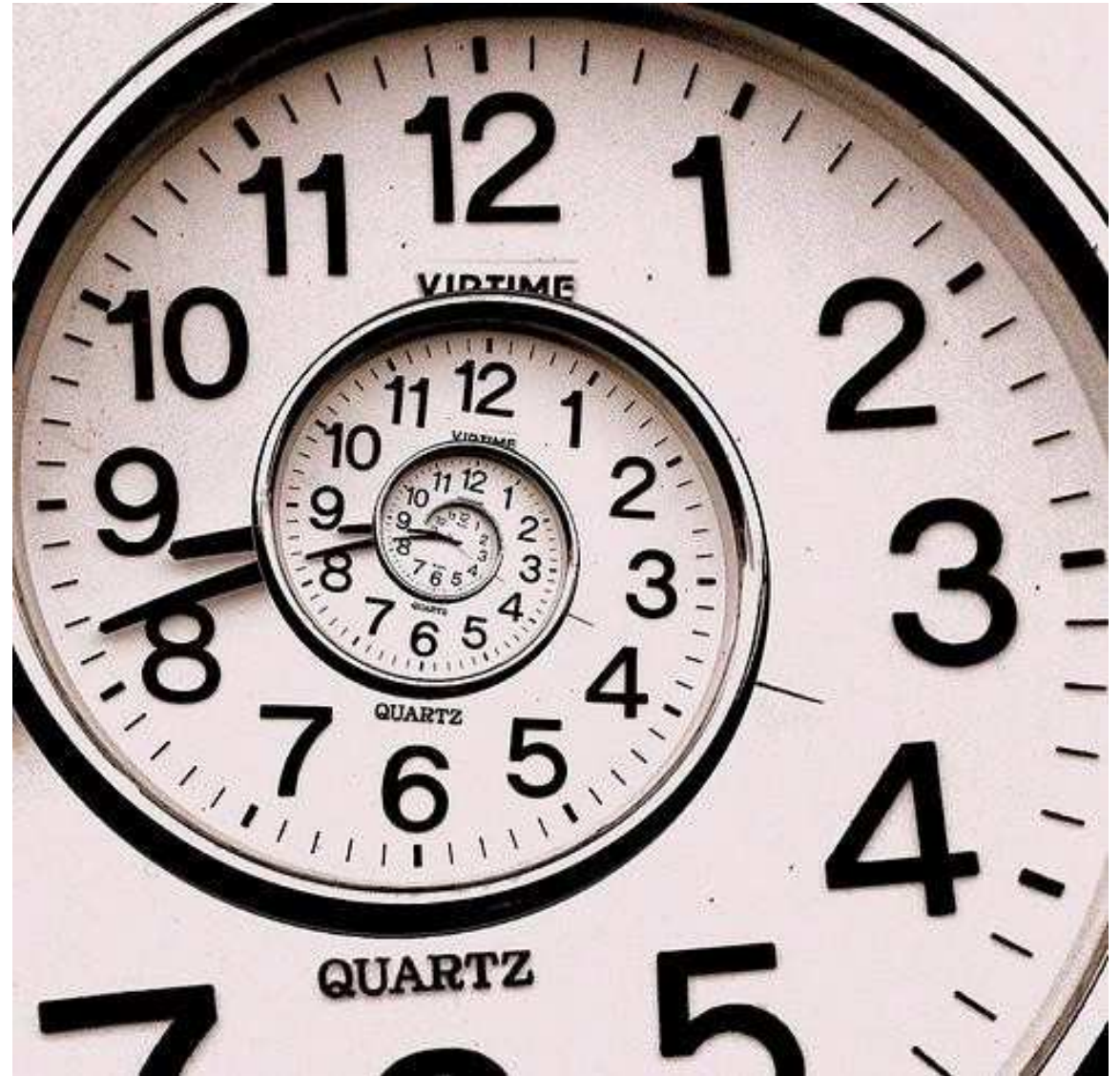


Youth Participation



TIME!

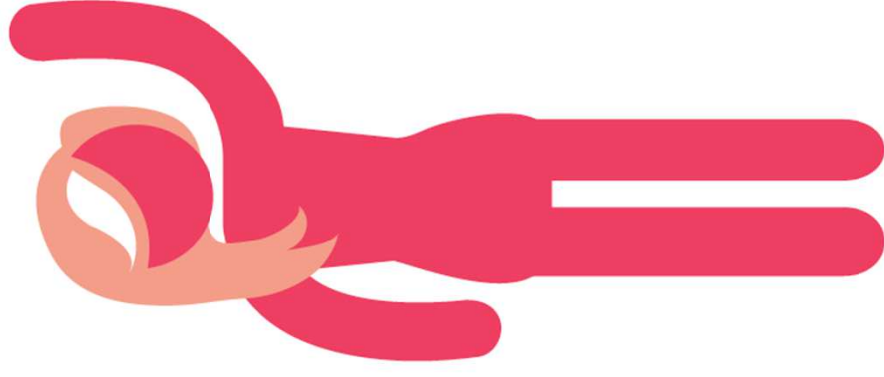
Gear responses to the needs of the developing adolescent and young adult.



Acknowledge and address



FIRST AND FOREMOST, A
YOUTH-FOCUSED APPROACH
TO HOUSING FIRST MUST GO
BEYOND ASSISTING YOUNG
PEOPLE MERELY TO BECOME
INDEPENDENT, BUT RATHER,
TO ENABLE THEM TO MAKE A
SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO
ADULTHOOD.





Key *planning* & *implementation* challenges





Implementation Challenges

Good Case Management

- Client driven
- Effective assessment
- Family reconnection
- Shelter diversion
- Aftercare





Planning Issues

Partnerships are Key

“So get everybody and anybody together. If you aren't sure whether they should be involved, invite them anyway. One of the greatest advantages of collaboration, especially in the early stages, but is important throughout, is that those at the table and part of the development now have a vested interest, when they feel like they are part of something bigger than they are and have influence they become supporters instead of antagonists.

Wally Czech, Lethbridge Housing First

Planning Issues

Clarity of roles

Sorting out who does what





Implementation Challenges

Matching supports to client acuity





Implementation Challenges

Nurturing effective
working relations
with **landlords**





Implementation Challenges

The **first three months**
are a crucial transition period





Implementation Challenges

Consider the needs of the fifteen percent for whom

housing stability

continues to be a challenge.

Don't give up on them.





Implementation Challenges

Avoid . . .



4

Planning and implementation is a **change management** exercise

CHANGE

LOVE IT 

FEAR IT 



Shifting to ***Housing First*** means
doing things differently . . .



Work in a chaotic environment often results in rules-based approaches as a means of keeping things under control.

RULES!
1. You **SHALL!**
2. You **WILL!**
3. You **MUST!**

Housing First is a ***client-centred*** approach ...



**Discharge
into
homelessness**

A CENTRAL TENET OF THE INFINITY PROJECT IS "ZERO DISCHARGE INTO HOMELESSNESS", MEANING THAT IF HOUSING BREAKS DOWN DUE TO A CRISIS, BEHAVIOURAL CHALLENGES OR OTHER ISSUES, YOUNG PEOPLE WILL NOT FIND THEMSELVES ON THE STREETS, BUT RATHER ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE SECURED.

5

The necessity of adopting **Harm Reduction**



Resistance to **harm reduction**

- A lack of awareness of what harm reduction is.
- A lack of training.
- A false belief that Harm Reduction promotes or encourages or promotes drug use.
- A perspective on drug use based on morality not evidence.
- People working in an abstinence only context are used to control.



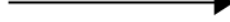
Perspectives on Addictions

- Moral Model
- Disease Model
- Learning Model

1,600,000

The WAR On DRUGS

NIXON LAUNCHES
WAR ON DRUGS



200,000

1925

1971

2012

THE U.S. STATE AND FEDERAL PRISON POPULATION
HAS INCREASED OVER 800% IN JUST 40 YEARS



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The importance of harm reduction: A core philosophy of virtually all approaches to Housing First is that there should be no requirement of sobriety or abstinence to participate in the program.

What IS Harm Reduction?

Harm reduction refers to policies, programmes and practices that aim to reduce the harms associated with the use of psychoactive drugs in people unable or unwilling to stop. The defining features are the focus on the prevention of harm, rather than on the prevention of drug use itself, and the focus on people who continue to use drugs.

NOTES about DRUG USE:



- Patterns may differ based on gender, socio-economic status and region.
- Not all usage signals ADDICTION
- Notion of “gateway drugs” not borne out by research.

NOTES about **ABSTINENCE:**



- If abstinence is imposed, it does not work.
- Abstinence can be incorporated within harm reduction, if that is what the client wants.
- As a mandatory approach, abstinence flies in the face of core principles of Housing First (no preconditions, client choice).

**Harm
Reduction**

Abstinence

Harm Reduction is considered to be a realistic and pragmatic approach to addressing the negative consequences of substance use and is based on recognition that abstinence may be neither a realistic or desired goal for some users.



Key Point:

Harm Reduction is a client-centred approach that works where young people are at.



You Are
HERE

Stages of Change model

- 1. Precontemplation*
- 2. Contemplation*
- 3. Preparation*
- 4. Action*
- 5. Maintenance*



Questions or comments?

