

## Definition of Indigenous Homelessness

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather, it is more fully described and understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews. These include: individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities. Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships (Thistle, J.A. 2017).



*"I'd get a place, lose it. I'd end up at a shelter, stay in a shelter for a week or two then get another place, use, cash my cheque and end up back on the street. That cycle continued for a while."*

*Jesse Thistle, Métis-Cree PhD Student at York and Governor General Medalist.*

## Contact Us

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### Project Partners:



## Kikékyelc: A Place of Belonging

A supportive, affordable and culturally congruent cohousing apartment complex for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Elders and youth who are currently involved in the provincial child welfare system or who have aged out of care.

***Kikékyelc (kee-kek-yel-c):***

*To cover young protectively, how birds wrap wings around their young.*

## 12 Dimensions of Indigenous Homelessness

- Historic Displacement
- Contemporary Geographic Separation
- Spiritual Disconnection
- Mental Disruption and Imbalance
- Cultural Disintegration and Loss
- Overcrowding
- Relocation and Mobility
- Going Home
- Nowhere to Go
- Escaping or Evading Harm
- Emergency Crisis
- Climatic Refugee

# The Facts about Homeless Youth and Ageing Out of Care

- When youth age out of the system at 19 years old, they no longer receive Ministry supports, thereby putting them at serious risk of loss of identity, family, community, and culture.
- Compared to the general public youth experiencing homelessness are 193 times more likely to have been involved with the child welfare system.
- 58% of youth experiencing homelessness reported some type of involvement with child protection services over a lifetime (Executive Summary of Child Welfare and Youth Homelessness, 2017).
- In Canada over half of the youth in care are Indigenous. This is alarming considering Indigenous people only make up 7% of total population of young Canadians (STATS CAN, 2011).



## Eligibility Criteria

All genders of Indigenous youth who are currently involved with or who have had experience with the child welfare system. This includes professionals and youth who attend university.

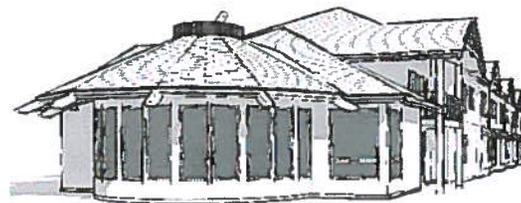
Indigenous youth 16 - 26 years.

Indigenous professionals and elders.

Youth must demonstrate a level of readiness to live independently.

Priority is given to youth in the greatest need.

Successful applicants will be screened and invited for an interview.



## Our Vision

Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family and Community Services (LMO) is the first Child Welfare Agency in BC to develop and operate their own housing, and one of the only youth housing developments that offers a continuum of culturally appropriate and supportive housing for youth ageing out of care.

In April 2017, the province of British Columbia announced that LMO was awarded \$3.9 million from BC Housing to develop affordable Indigenous Housing in Kamloops.

Kikékyelc: A Place of Belonging is a 31 unit apartment building that is alcohol, drug and violence free. There are single and one bedroom suites, accessible suites, a kekuli common space, a common kitchen, coin laundry facilities, green space, resident Elders, cultural mentors, and in-house support workers.

Kikékyelc will cohause Indigenous elders, professionals and youth who are or who were previously associated with child welfare services. Cohousing fosters traditional intergenerational relationships, which strengthen our community and cultivates a sense of belonging to all our residents. We honour these relationships as having genuine, undeniable value.