

# Homelessness and Health Equity in Kingston

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# Kingston Context

1. Rat Park
2. Local homelessness numbers
3. Update on our 10 year housing plan
4. Our biggest challenges
5. The Second Curve: Trauma-Informed Community Building



# ACE: Adverse Community Environments: Rat Park



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*Mackenzie, 2018*

# Some numbers...

# Experiencing Homelessness	2013	2016	2018
Urban (Absolute Homeless)	106	91	81
Urban (Total Homeless)	N/A	137	152
Rural	54	30*	61



# Some numbers...

- Lily's Place = 19 beds
- In From the Cold = 34 beds
- Kingston Youth Shelter = 15 beds

0.7%



# Local Successes

1. Significant changes in 2015 to prioritize the Housing First approach. Rather than spend more \$\$ on shelter system, the emphasis now on permanent housing and case manager supports
2. These efforts have seen ~400 households housed, with 95% still stably housed
3. 23% reduction on Shelter services since 2015
4. Youth Homelessness strategy in place



*“There hasn’t really been any evidence of progress in reducing the numbers of homeless and the reason is...*

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Stephen Gaetz, Director of the Canadian Homelessness Research Network at York University.



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# Issues from the GEMBA

- Diversion too harsh (“feels like an interrogation”)
- Service restriction too harsh
- Non-Kingston residents...yes or no?
- 0.7%...our issues could escalate quickly
- Exhausting, demanding work
  - Decisions always being challenged



# Trauma-Informed Community Building

First Curve – old way of doing things	Second Curve – emerging vision
The system is designed to meet the needs of staff	The system is designed to be client-focused. Trauma informed principles are applied at every door
Lack of alignment and perverse incentives produce chaos in the system	Systems, structures and processes are aligned and intentionally designed to achieve the outcomes required
Goal is to maximize resources for your silo	Goal is to allocate resources appropriately within all resources available
System is fragmented. Clients fend for themselves, moving from silo to silo	System is seamless. Service is integrated and well-coordinated. High satisfaction



# TRAUMA INFORMED COMMUNITY BUILDING

## TICB

- De-escalates chaos and stress
- Fosters resiliency
- Strengthens social connections
- Recognizes trauma

Increased readiness

## OUTCOMES

- Foundation and support for effective delivery of programs and services
- Creates conditions for long-term community and individual change

## The Second Curve:

- Let's create a common understanding and philosophy of Harm Reduction and Trauma-Informed principles
- Most complicated clients are not suitable for shelter.
- Continue to recognize this is a community issue. Keep partnership momentum going, keep re-design going

