

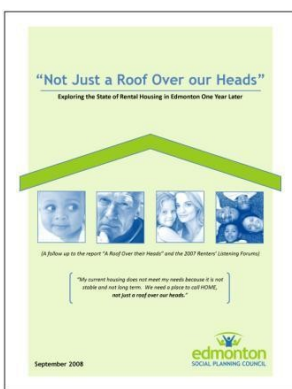
Research Update

Please distribute widely!

October, 2008

Research News

The ESPC recently released a report on the rental housing situation in Edmonton. **“Not Just a Roof Over Our Heads: Exploring the State of Rental Housing in Edmonton One Year Later”** details the findings of a survey of over 700 Edmonton renters.



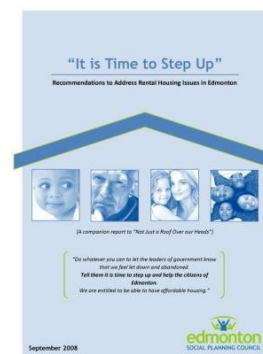
“Despite some improvement in the vacancy rate, five times more renters reported that their housing situation is getting worse rather than better,” noted Anette Kinley, who authored the report. “Over four out of five renters reported that their rent went up on

the last year. The average increase was \$195 per month”.

Renters facing the steepest increases were those who could least afford it, namely those living in modestly priced rental accommodation. The survey findings are consistent with the most recent report of the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation which shows that most of the improvement in the vacancy

rate is in higher end rental accommodation, such as rental condos, and not in the lower end of the rental market.

The survey is paired with a companion report detailing recommendations on how to address the ongoing crisis in affordable rental housing. **“It is Time to Step Up: Recommendations to Address Rental Housing Issues in Edmonton”** contains 20 recommendations. These include measures to stabilize rents, build more affordable housing, ensure regulation, accountability and transparency, provide government assistance, limit ‘condominiumization’, implement tax solutions, enhance community safety, address city planning, and end homelessness.



Both reports are available at: www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca.

Most articles listed here are also available in PDF format by searching in the online catalogue.

The catalogue is available 24/7, and can be accessed by going to:

www.socialresearchlibrary.ca

You Never Know if You’re Going to Wake Up Dead: Living without a Home

Stories from people who live without a home in Edmonton

Bissell Centre, July 2008.

The Bissell Centre recently released a report based on surveys of homeless individuals in Edmonton. In June and July, 2008, three researchers interviewed 62 people on the experience of homelessness. The interviews took place at a variety of agencies and various locations throughout the city including river valley camps and in the urban core.

This report summarizes the content of those inter-

views and includes the words of the interviewees themselves—their thoughts and experiences on how they became homeless, their daily life, the presence of police. It also discusses the difficulties with ‘sleeping rough’, accessing services, survival, looking for housing, and factors that would help them to obtain and retain a home.

The report concludes that “We can do better. If we listen to what people without homes tell us, if we actually act on what they say will help, we can do much better. In the words of one person interviewed, “No one should be homeless in Alberta.”

A link to the report (PDF) can be found on the Bissell Centre’s website, www.bissellcentre.org/services.htm, under ‘Community Liaison Program’.

Inside this Update:

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News

The Edmonton Food Security Network is pleased to announce the first in a series of five learning-meetings!

These events are designed for front-line service providers who work with food security issues in Edmonton, and are open for any involved/interested community members to attend.

Tuesday, November 4, 2008, 9-11 AM

City of Edmonton - Community Services

Circle Square, 11808 St. Albert Trail
(NW Corner)

Plenty of free parking available on site

The morning will start with a presentation by **Valerie Wilber of Breakfast For Learning Alberta**, followed by information and resource sharing. Light snacks available.

Please RSVP by phone 780.700.3807, or to sgibson@earthsharesolutions.ca.

The **Edmonton Food Security Network** is a group of people representing various organizations who are concerned about hunger, poverty, malnutrition, and social justice. The group has been meeting informally for almost ten years. Over the years the EFSN's activities have included sharing information and resources, creating opportunities for working together, improving the access to food for children and families, and increasing public awareness of food insecurity.

The Edmonton Food Security Network's mandate is to help organizations in the Capital Region increase food security by:

- Acting as a central resource network
- Facilitating connections and collaborations
- Encouraging partnerships and initiatives
- Increasing public awareness of hunger and malnutrition



Reviews

More Than Bricks and Mortar: A rights-based strategy to prevent girl homelessness in Canada

Report by Asia Czapska et al, Justice for Girls, May 2008.

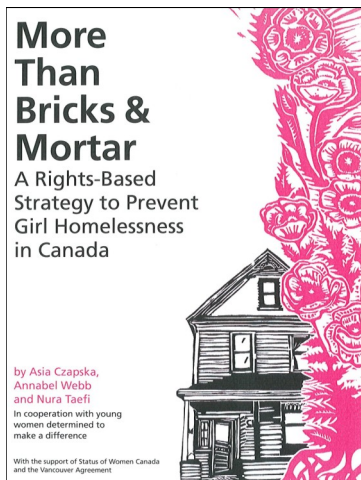
This report is based on interviews with young women who were homeless or had been homeless as teens, interviews with activists who had worked with homeless girls, and visits to youth and women's housing organizations across the country. Justice for Girls is a Vancouver based organization founded on a vision of social justice and equality for teenage girls, which operates with the belief that young women how live and have lived in poverty must define the solutions to girl homelessness.

The report describes the unique situation of teenage girl homelessness and poverty, discusses the inequalities that lead to girl homelessness, and accounts some of the consequences experienced by young women that are homeless, including male violence and exploitation, addiction, disease

and death, difficulties accessing education, criminalization, and life in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The report then outlines the ways in which various levels of government have failed young women in preventing or adequately addressing the conditions which lead to teenage girl homelessness, and the crisis that now exists.

A rights based approach based on feminist principles is outlined in this reports strategy to address girl homelessness. The strategy includes measures to prevent homelessness, government actions, access to education, community and feminist actions, actions at the international level, and includes recommendations for working with girls who have been sexually exploited and for developing a feminist housing strategy within communities.

This is a powerful report that begins and ends with the voices of girls who have experienced poverty and homelessness. It is a valuable resource for organizations working with youth, women, and girls in poverty.



Reviews, cont.

Conceptualizing Optimum Homeless Shelter Service Delivery: The Interconnection between Programming, Community, and the Built Environment

Article by Jennifer L. Robinson and Stephen W. Baron

Published in the *Canadian Journal of Urban Research (CJUR)*, Summer 2007. Volume 16, Issue 1; p 53-75. A copy of the journal is available in the ESPC Resource Library.

Article Review by Anette Kinley

When it comes to homeless shelters, the interconnected factors of service delivery characteristics, community relationships and physical environment are crucial to success. The results of this Calgary-based study show that all three factors need to be considered when planning the development or expansion of homeless shelters.

The first factor, service delivery characteristics, includes elements such as: breadth of programming, effective management and attention to client dignity and safety. In terms of community relationships, some elements that help to ensure success include: correcting misperceptions about homelessness and shelters, increasing community involvement in the shelter (fostering a sense of ownership), and developing a role for shelters in the local economy. Finally, elements of the physical environment that have an impact on shelter success include: good architectural "fit" of the shelter in the community, smaller shelter

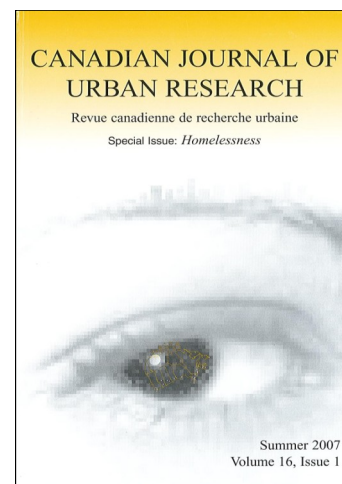
size/client volume, accessibility of location and proximity to other services, and limited impact on public use of the surrounding area.

The three factors are inextricably interconnected. If, for example, the physical space around the shelter is not orderly or well-maintained, the community's perception of the shelter is more likely to be negative, and will prevent community engagement and relationship-building.

While the article brings to light many important factors to be considered in shelter planning, it does not fully explore some of the issues discussed. In particular, the conflict between the goals of 1) increasing public awareness and understanding of homelessness and 2) increasing the public's sense of comfort and safety. While the article states that the first goal is furthered by the visibility of homelessness, it recommends concealing the unpleasant aspects of homelessness to achieve the second goal. The failure of the authors to explore such contradictions leaves a number of crucial questions left unanswered.

The article is based on the results of a study conducted from 2006 to 2008 to inform the redevelopment of a homeless shelter in Calgary. The study involved interviews with 50 North American and UK experts in homeless services and urban planning and design.

The Summer 2007 edition of the CJUR features numerous other articles on the topic of homelessness. Articles offer insight into: street youth, health, public opinion, long-term research and causes of homelessness.

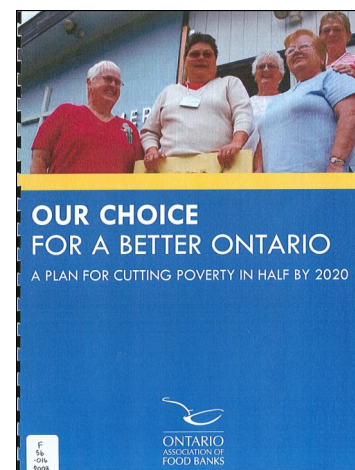


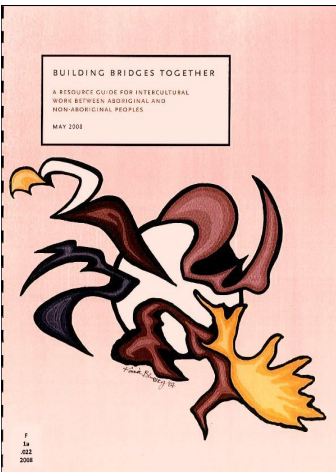
Our Choice For a Better Ontario: A plan for cutting poverty in half by 2020. Report by the Ontario Association of Food Banks, September 2008.

What's the role of a food bank? With their new plan on poverty reduction, the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB) has stated loud and clear that their role extends far beyond providing clients with food donations. This report includes a series of core principles to guide the development of an Ontario poverty reduction strategy, complete with a set of goals that the government should establish and key actions that will help to meet those goals. These goals will be achieved through investing to achieve the four key pillars of poverty reduction: a home in a supportive and prosperous community; economic security through supportive benefits and protections; opportunity for political and economic empowerment; and public responsibility through a high-level government. This report will be of use to anybody interested in the development and advocacy of poverty reduction strategies.

We Can't Afford to do Business This Way: A study of the administrative burden resulting from funder accountability and compliance practices. Report by Lynn Eakin, Wellesley Institute, September 2007.

Funding is tough – and this report outlines why. While it may not present solutions, this report is an invaluable tool in demonstrating the need for reforming the funding process "to minimize the administrative burden and maximize the flexibility of agencies to adapt, respond and innovate, with a focus on results, not controls" (p. 45). The cost of not acting? The study concludes that if governments, non-profit organizations, and local communities don't come together to create new systems, the results will be less value for money, less effective systems, placing nonprofit values and mission at risk, less innovation, and weaker, disconnected, and fractious communities. This report will be useful to anybody whose work involves communication between agencies and funders.





Resources

Journals

Canadian Journal of Urban Research

Special issue on Homelessness. Contains:

- Research on Homelessness in Canada
- Sao Paulo: des tactiques pour habiter la rue
- Can You Be Healthy on the Street? Exploring the Health Experiences of Halifax Street Youth
- Employment Training for Street Youth: A Viable Option?
- Conceptualizing Optimum Homeless Shelter Service Delivery: The Interconnection between Programming, Community, and the Built Environment
- Comparing Public Opinion and the Prevalence of Homelessness in Canada to the United States

- What Happens over Time? Researching Homelessness Longitudinally
- Perceived Reasons for Homelessness in Canada: Testing the Heterogeneity Hypothesis
- Book Reviews

Perspectives on Labour and Income

Contains:

- Father's use of paid parental leave
- Work life balance of shift workers
- Remittances by recent immigrants

- Changes in family wealth
- Unionization
- A profile of the Canadian forces

Family and Health

Volumes 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 15 – The Vanier Institute of the Family's digest designed to increase community and media awareness about the factors that contribute to a person's overall health and well-being. In 15 issues, Families & Health looks at everything from having a healthy birth weight to living in a clean environment, getting a good education, having a job and managing stress.

Canadian Planning and Policy

Contains:

- Territorial Planning Experimentation in Quebec
- Improving the Interface between Urban Municipalities and Aboriginal Communities (review)
- Indigenous Planning – An Emerging Context
- Le zonage et la classification des usages de restauration et de commerces d'alimentation
- Places/Spaces of Celebration and Protest: Citizenship, Civic Conversations, and the Promotion of Rights and Obligations
- Social Mix and Canadian Public Housing Redevelopment: Experiences in Toronto
- Book and Essay Reviews

Books and Reports

Environmental Health

Human Health in a Changing Climate. CD-ROM by Health Canada, 2008.

Heat: How to stop the planet from burning. Book by George Monbiot, 2007.

Our Climate, Our Health. DVD by Health Canada, 2006.

Pandemonium: Bird flu, mad cow disease, and other biological plagues of the 21st century. Book by Andrew Nikiforuk, 2006.

The Weather Makers: How man is changing the climate and what it means for life on Earth. Book by Tim Flannery, 2005.

The Monster at Our Door: The global threat of avian flu. Book by Mike Davis, 2005.

Agency Issues

From Many Voices: Learnings from the MISWAA project multi-stakeholder process. Report by Margot Lettner, Wellesley Institute, September 2008.

Building Bridges Together: A resource guide for intercultural work between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Report by Scott Graham, SPARC-BC, May 2008.

Making Change Happen. A 4-part series on activism and social justice by Just Associates, 2006.

We Can't Afford to do Business This Way: A study of the administrative burden resulting from funder accountability and compliance practices. Report by Lynn Eakin, Wellesley Institute, September 2007.

Resources, cont.

Books and Reports

Family, Children and Youth

Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2008. Report by Statistics Canada, September 2008.

Growing up in North America: The Economic Well-Being of Children in Canada, the USA, and Mexico. Report by Canadian Council on Social Development & partners, September 2008.

Pathways for Youth to the Labour Market: A Synthesis Report. Report by Ron Saunders, Canadian Policy Research Networks, September 2008.

Learning Together: Families First Edmonton 2007-2008 Progress Report. Families First Edmonton, 2008.

Good Servant, Bad Master? Electronic Media and the Family. Report by Arlene Moscovitch, Vanier Institute of the Family, October 2007.

A Place in Time: Families, Family Matters & Why They Matter. Lecture by Robert Glossop, CD pro-

duced by Vanier Institute of the Family, October 2007.

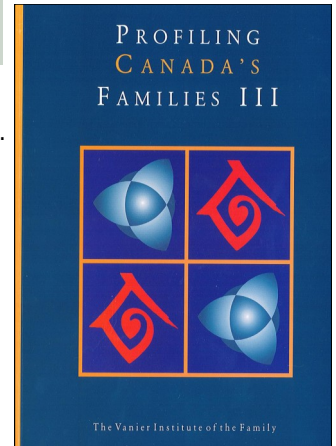
"What Do You Mean I Can't Have a Say?" Young Canadians and Their Government: Charting the Course for Youth Civic and Political Participation. Report by Andre Turcotte, Canadian Policy Research Networks, June 2007.

The Effects of Changing Age Structure on Households and Families to 2026. Report by Roger Sauve, Vanier Institute of the Family, December 2006.

Locking Them Up to Keep Them "Safe": Criminalized girls in British Columbia. Report by Amber Richelle Dean, Justice for Girls, 2005.

Profiling Canada's Families 3. Book by the Vanier Institute of the Family, 2004.

Reframed Family Portraits. Lecture by Kerry Daly hosted by Vanier Institute for the Family, October 14, 2004.



Search our catalogue and link to resources online:

socialresearchlibrary.ca

Housing

The Role of Public-Private Partnerships in Funding Social Housing in Canada. Report by Alexandra Moskalyk, Canadian Policy Research Networks, September 2008.

A Roof Over Our Heads 2008: Affordable Housing and Homelessness Policy in Canada. Report by David Snow, Canada West Foundation, September 2008.

Towards Food Security Policy for Canada's Social Housing Sector. Report by Abigail Friendly, Canadian Policy Research Networks, September 2008.

More Than Bricks and Mortar: A rights-based strategy to prevent girl homelessness in Canada. Report by Asia Czapska et al, Justice for Girls, May 2008.

We Are Neighbours: The impact of supportive housing on community, social, economic and attitude changes. Report by Alice de Wolff, Wellesley Institute, May 2008.

Wellesley Institute National Housing Report Card. Report by Michael Shapcott, Wellesley Institute, February 2008.

Other Topics

Sustainable Healthcare for Seniors: Keeping it public. Report by Greg Flanagan, Parkland Inst., Sept. 2008.

Our Choice For a Better Ontario: A plan for cutting poverty in half by 2020. Report by the Ontario Association of Food Banks, September 2008.

Poverty Levels and Trends in Comparative Perspective. Paper by Daniel Meyer and Geoffrey Wallace, Institute for Research on Poverty (USA), September 2008.

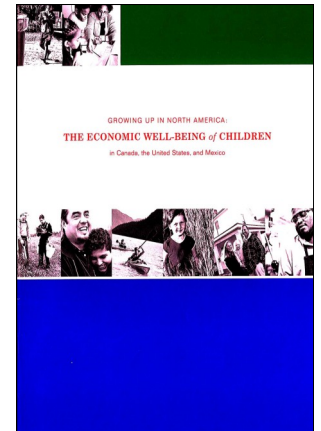
What Does it Mean to be Poor in a Rich Society? Paper by Robert Haveman, Institute for Research on Poverty (USA), September 2008.

Group Differences in Educational Attainment Among the Children of Immigrants. Report by Statistics Canada, September 2008.

The Report on the March 3, 2008 Provincial General Election. Elections Alberta, 2008.

Analysis of the Spatial Distribution of Crime in Canada: Summary of Major Trends 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2006. Josee Savoie, Statistics Canada, Sept. 2008.

Global Citizens: Making Globalization Work. VHS recording of Stephen Lewis' keynote address during the 2001 University of Alberta International Week.



Research Links

Check out these websites. These are just a few of Edmonton's great organizations doing great work!

Volunteer Edmonton—Research Links

<http://www.volunteeredmonton.com>

Resource Centre for Voluntary Organizations—Virtual Library

<http://www.rcvo.org/libraryrcvo/library.html>

Gateway Association for Community Living—Parent Resource Manual published August 2008

<http://www.gatewayacl.org/>

Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women—Presentation: We Have Cried Enough Action Plan

<http://www.iaaw.ca/pdf/WHCEIndex2.pdf>

Homeward Trust Edmonton—Research

<http://www.homewardtrust.ca/index.php?page=research>

Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers—Research

<http://www.emcn.ab.ca/research>

Action for Healthy Communities—Community Dialogues

<http://www.a4hc.ca/dialogues.htm>

Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations—Research

<http://www.naarr.org/>

I want your input! How can this Update be made more useful for you? Contact Erin at:

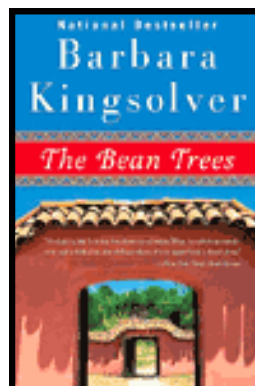
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The Edmonton Social Planning Council has started a Book Club!!

So far we've read *My Home Street Home* by Edmonton author Val Stevens, and *The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls.



Join us on Thursday, October 30th at 5:30pm, at the ESPC Resource Library, when we'll be discussing *The Bean Trees*, by Barbara Kingsolver.

About *The Bean Trees*:

"Clear-eyed and spirited, Taylor Greer grew up poor in rural Kentucky with the goals of avoiding pregnancy and getting away. But when she heads west with high hopes and a barely functional car, she meets the human condition head-on. By the time Taylor arrives in Tucson, Arizona, she has acquired a completely unexpected child, a three-year-old American Indian girl named Turtle, and must somehow come to terms with both motherhood and the necessity for putting down roots. Hers is a story about love and friendship, abandonment and belonging, and the discovery of surprising resources in apparently empty places."

Copies of *The Bean Trees* are available at the Edmonton Public Library, and most bookstores.

Find out more on our website, www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca, under Resource Library and Links.