



Housing Solutions for Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg: *Final Lab Report*

Housing Solutions Lab for Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care Final Report

January 2021

The Housing Solutions Lab for Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg took place on Treaty 1 territory, the original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the homeland of the Metis Nation.



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Graphic design: Michael Champagne, Alex Yuzwa & Hannah Owczar

This project entitled “Housing Solutions for Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg” received funding from the National Housing Strategy under the NHS Solutions Labs, however, the views expressed are the personal views of the authors and CMHC accepts no responsibility for them.

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To find out more about the Winnipeg Housing Solutions Lab and access supplementary knowledge products visit: www.fearlessR2W.ca

I spent my whole life surviving, so [couch-surfing] didn't feel very different from being in CFS [Child and Family Services], honestly. I remember the first time moving in my life and it felt weird. It was just like: "We're moving you from here to here" and like "You're not living with this family anymore, we're going to move you over here." I was like "Oh." And that was it...that was it. I was scared. It was the first time in my life I was scared and the last time I was scared of moving. Couch-surfing, it was never uncomfortable. It felt like I was just moving to another house, to another family. Like these are my bros and they care about me and they're going to let me chill here. You know what I mean? But in the end, I learned that they weren't my bros. But there was one [bro] who was always there when I needed to go somewhere, when everyone else was like: "Yeah, I can't have you." No matter what, he was like "I've got a place for you. You've always got somewhere to be."

Tyrel, 31

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHAT is the Housing Solutions Lab for Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care?

Through key notions of the “Village” and “*mino-pimatisiwin/mino-bimaadiziwin*” (translates to the “good life”), this Housing Solutions Lab sought to better understand and respond to the challenge of Indigenous youth homelessness and housing insecurity in Winnipeg’s North End and adjacent inner city neighborhoods. Over a 20-month period, the Housing Solutions Lab convened a diverse range of youth, community members, organizations, and sectors to co-develop innovative solutions to support housing opportunities for Indigenous youth transitioning out of care toward independence and interdependence within their wider network of kinship relations and homelands.



Employing a variety of methods, tools, and sensibilities, this challenge was approached from different perspectives and worldviews, including those who:

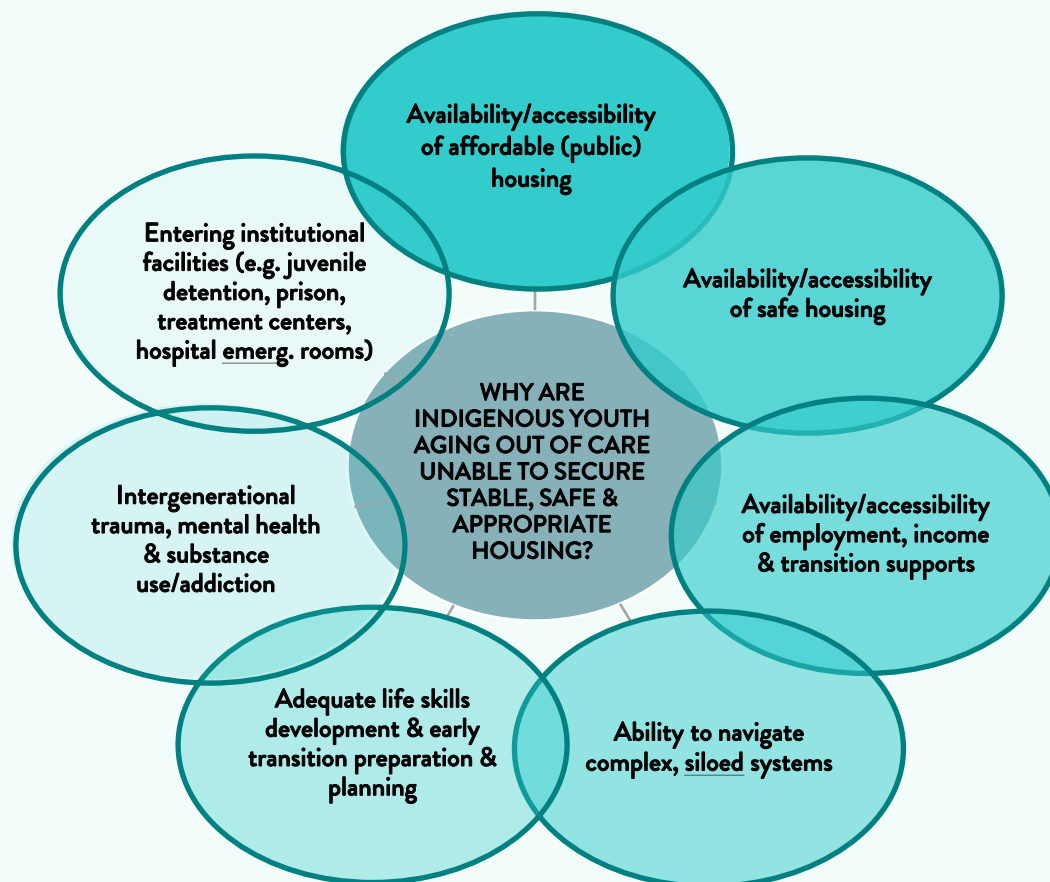
- are or were in the system (youth in care, aging out of care or aged out of care)
- are working “in” the system (child welfare workers, service providers, administrators, policymakers, etc.)
- are working “around” the system (e.g. advocates, families, community organizers, housing professionals, etc.)

The Solutions Lab aimed to build bridges of empathy and provide advocates, service providers, policymakers, and community members with a more complete picture of the systems impacting Indigenous youth aging out of care. The solutions which were co-

created are intended to be scaled up among decision-makers and scaled out by communities to close service gaps and reduce the number of Indigenous youth facing housing insecurity and homelessness once they age out of Manitoba's child welfare system.

SO WHAT did we learn and what solutions did we test?

The root causes of homelessness and housing insecurity among urban Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg are entrenched in colonization, land dispossession, institutional racism, discrimination, and the systemic incentivization and financialization of the child's best interests. They are characterized by ongoing failures of systems and individuals to unconditionally love, support and care for young people's sense of cultural identity, health, and overall well-being. We identified various factors that directly hinder Indigenous youth aging out of care from being able to secure stable, safe, and culturally appropriate housing



Based on learnings, Lab participants and partners identified 7 solutions ideas that had the potential to leverage change related to housing challenges for Indigenous youth aging out of care. Each of these ideas were prototyped and tested to learn about their viability, effectiveness, and acceptability. These prototypes were selected based on their relevance, potential for impact, and capacity to address multifaceted aspects of the housing challenge in a holistic way.



A residential, culturally safe, and harm-reduction-focused transition house with wrap-around supports to help Indigenous youth aging out of care transition into permanent and independent living arrangements.



A strategy to ensure coordinated access for unoccupied social housing across various levels of policy, advocacy and service delivery.



The Kinship Support Initiative provides formal and informal family type wrap-around supports and advocacy for Indigenous youth aging out of care while they secure and maintain housing.



A youth aging out website that offers the necessary tools to help youth and service providers navigate relevant housing, social support and advocacy resources and services.



The Community Safety Host prototype supports an alternative to library security guards and provides youth employment opportunities to ensure career mentorship, employment training, and financial security.



A youth aging out board game that acts as a tool to educate and train service providers, social workers, housing advocates, and policy decision-makers on the experiences and realities of Indigenous youth aging out of care.



The Aging Out Party provides a space for ceremony to celebrate and honor Indigenous youth as they age out of care into adulthood with loved ones.

NOW WHAT are the next steps and pathways for future action?

Each prototype team tested the above solution ideas and developed an action plan outlining next steps to build on learnings from the prototyping process. This included an assessment of ideas to test further or let go, and others which were deemed viable and ready to graduate to a pilot or to be scale up and out.

These action plans were integrated with learnings from across other Lab activities to develop a Solutions Roadmap outlining 5 areas of impact and 15 key actions to move forward.



SOLUTIONS ROADMAP: Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg

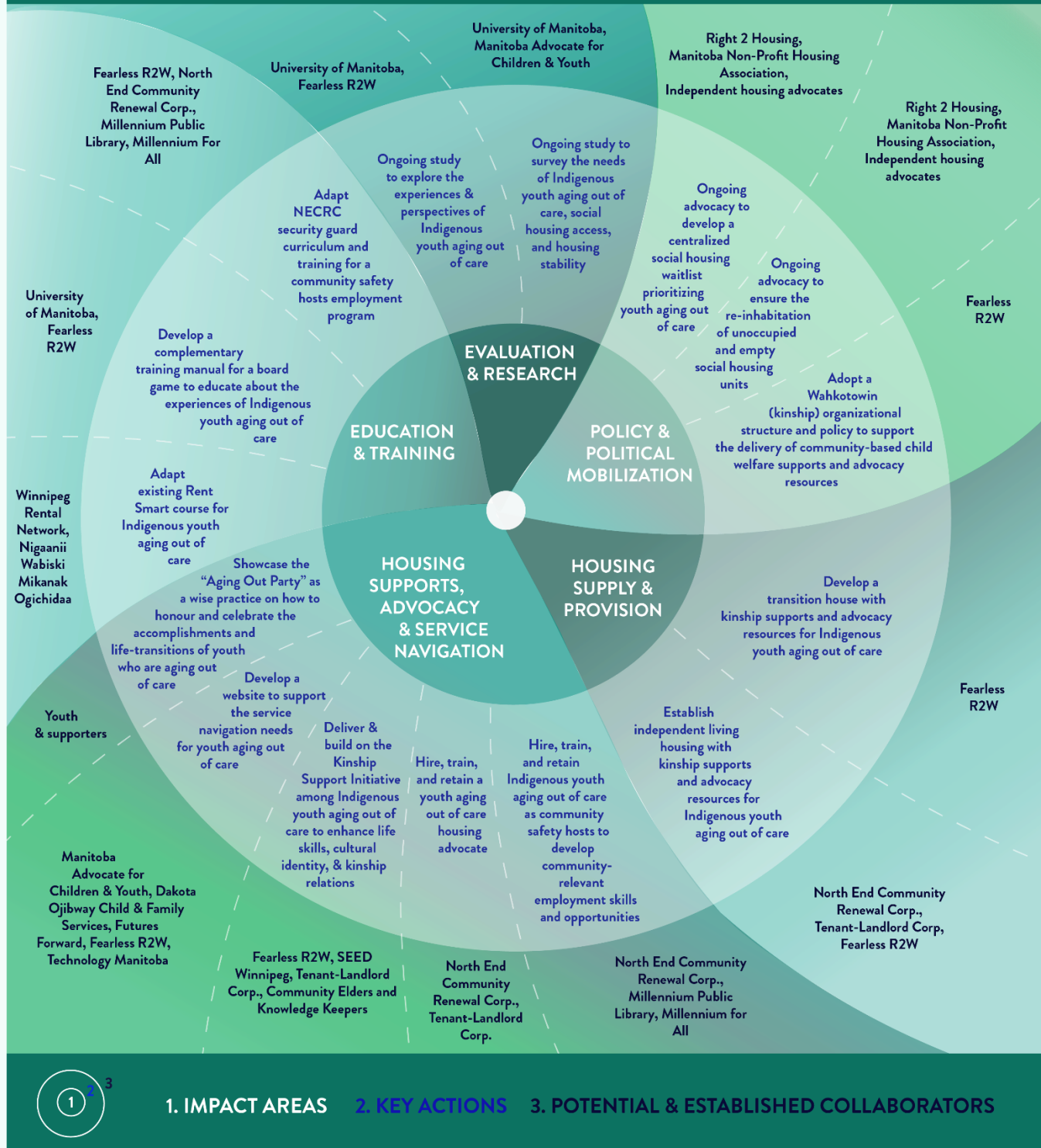


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SUPPLEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS (*visit: www.fearlessR2W.ca*)

LAB REPORTS & PLANS

Report for Phase 1: Definition
 Report for Phase 2: Discovery
 Report for Phase 3: Development
 Report for Phase 4: Prototyping & Phase 5: Roadmap
 Discovery Phase Learning Report
 Developmental Evaluation Framework

LAB INFOGRAPHICS

Infographic: Our Project
 Infographic: What Principle Do We Follow?
 Infographic: Ideas...So Far
 Infographic: Prototype Teams
 Infographic: Potential Prototyping Questions

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Indigenous youth, including First Nations, Metis, and Inuit, are drastically overrepresented in the child welfare system in Manitoba, representing 90% of all children in care.¹ In the North End neighborhood of Winnipeg, which has the highest apprehension rates across Canada, 1 in 6 children are apprehended often leading to homelessness, unemployment, contact with the justice system, and poorer self-rated health outcomes upon aging out of care.^{2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7} In 2018, the Winnipeg Street Census reported that 51.5% of people experiencing homelessness had been in the care of child welfare at one point in their lives with the majority self-identifying as Indigenous. Among them 62.4% of respondents experienced homelessness within one year of leaving care signaling inadequate transition housing supports.⁸

The negative outcomes related to child welfare apprehension and homelessness are implicated in historical and ongoing legacies of colonization, racism, land dispossession, and particularly in the prairie regions, high Indian Residential School enrolment and child apprehension rates during the 60's Scoop.⁹ They continue to displace and dispossess children, families, and communities from their homes and homelands that are intimately tied to culture, identity, wellbeing, and a sense of belonging. These intergenerational challenges are evident in urban centres such as Winnipeg where many First Nations, Metis and Inuit families have migrated willingly or unwillingly over the last 60 years to pursue a variety of social, economic, familial, and educational opportunities.¹⁰

Despite low rankings on various indicators of health and socioeconomic well-being,¹¹ the North End has continued to persevere through sustained political mobilization and cultural revitalization in the mid-1980s by Indigenous elders, grandmothers, women, and youth as well as Indigenous-led community organizations. Within the past 10 years since *Idle No More* (2012), the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action* (2015), and the *Ministry of Families' Report of the Legislative Review Committee*, these declarations have evolved in Winnipeg as a reminder on how cities are—and always have been—tied to the protection of ancestral homelands, waterways, and future generations of children and youth. A concerted

¹ Ministry of Families. (2018). *Transforming child welfare legislation in Manitoba. Opportunities to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth Report of the Legislative Review Committee*. Winnipeg: Government of Manitoba.

² Winnipeg Street Census. (2018). *Winnipeg Street Census 2018: Final Report*. Winnipeg: Social Planning Council of Winnipeg

³ Brownell, M. D., Chartier, M., Au, W., MacWilliam, L., Schultz, J., Guenette, W., & Valdivia, J. (2015). *The educational outcomes of children in care in Manitoba*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Centre for Health Policy

⁴ Nickel, N. C., Turnbull, L., Wall-Wieler, E., Au, W., Ekuma, O., MacWilliam, L., Enns, J.E. Lee, J. B. McCulloch, S., Burchill, C., & Brownell, M. (2020). Overlap between child protection services and the youth justice system: protocol for a retrospective population-based cohort study using linked administrative data in Manitoba, Canada. *BMJ*, 10(7).

⁵ Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth. (2020). "Stop Giving Me a Number and Start Giving Me a Person" How 22 Girls Illuminate the Cracks in the Manitoba Youth Mental Health and Addiction System. Winnipeg: Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth

⁶ Here and Now. (2018). *Here and Now: The Winnipeg Plan to End Youth Homelessness*. Retrieved from https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/28239_here_now_plan_report_FIN_WEB.pdf

⁷ Edwards, K. (2017). *Fighting foster care: The stunning number of First Nations kids in care is a new touchstone for activists – and for rebel parents*. Retrieved from <https://www.macleans.ca/first-nations-fighting-foster-care/>

⁸ Winnipeg Street Census, 2018

⁹ Greenwood, M., De Leeuw, S., & Lindsay, N. M. (Eds.). (2018). *Determinants of Indigenous peoples' health: beyond the social*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

¹⁰ Environics Institute. (2011). *Winnipeg City Report - Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study*. Toronto: Environics Institute.

¹¹ Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. (2015). *Point Douglas Community Area Profile, 2015*. Winnipeg: Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

resurgence of inner city based Indigenous and non-Indigenous grassroots collectives, organizations, and families have become involved in such decolonization processes in what some refer to as the *Village*.^{12,13}



A mural commemorating Tina Fontaine at Ndinawe's Youth Resource Centre in the North End, a young Anishinaabe girl who went missing and was murdered in 2014 while in care

In view of the Canadian Observatory of Homelessness's definition of Indigenous homelessness¹⁴ and the Housing First for Youth model (HF4Y),¹⁵ housing supports for youth transitioning out of care cannot be simply addressed through narrowly defined solutions that increase housing supply and re-

inhabitation. Homelessness among Indigenous youth requires a more robust response to address the urgent, complex, distinction-based, and culturally grounded housing needs and aspirations of urban Indigenous children, youth, and families.

About the Housing Solutions Lab

Through key notions of the "*Village*" and "*mino-pimatisiwin/mino-bimaadiziwin*" (translates to the "good life" in Cree and Anishinaabe), our Housing Solutions Lab sought to articulate and respond to the challenge of Indigenous youth homelessness and housing insecurity in Winnipeg's North End and adjacent inner city neighborhoods. In doing so, solutions aimed to support housing opportunities for Indigenous youth transitioning out of care toward independence and interdependence within their wider supportive network of kinship relations and homelands.

As community members of the North End who have grown up in the care of child welfare, and as planners and researchers external to experiences faced by community members but recognize the cyclical nature of these challenges, our team brought together diverse knowledges, experiences, and skill-sets. We sought to reframe homelessness and propose solutions to the often dangerous and unjust outcomes threatening the wellbeing of Indigenous youth aging out of care. As much as the process we engaged in over 20 months (April 2019 to November 2020) was about co-creating and implementing innovative housing solutions, it was about strengthening and advancing the relationships, work, and resources that already exist within Winnipeg and beyond with integrity, respect, and mutual reciprocity.

¹² Aboriginal Youth Opportunities. (2018). *AYO Presents: The Village Walk*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4LsH3sb0Vbc>.

¹³ Guiboche, A. (2015). *Got Bannock? In honour of the village we once had*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDuPuk7_OzE

¹⁴ Thistle, J. (2017.) *Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

¹⁵ Gaetz, S. (2017). *This is Housing First for Youth A Program Model Guide*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness.

WHO WE ARE

The Housing Solutions project was convened by a collaborative team of hosting partners and funders outlined below. However, this work would not have been possible without the support and tenacity of what we know as the Village; that is, the work of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations, collectives, families, and individuals located in Winnipeg's inner city.



Rady Faculty of
Health Sciences



PARTNERSHIP COORDINATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ABORIGINAL YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES (AYO!): an Indigenous-led grassroots youth collective and social movement network involved in various initiatives, programs, and campaigns to provide opportunities for and break stereotypes about Indigenous youth both locally and nationally

Represented by: Michael Champagne, Christopher Clacio

HTFC PLANNING AND DESIGN: a planning and design company that specializes in landscape architecture, community and resource planning, economic development, urban design, and interpretive design

Represented by: Tim Hogan, Zoë Mager, Adam Kroeker



culture-based research training and capacity building that focuses on social action, urban community development, and health and resiliency

RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT & COORDINATION

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA, RADY FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES: a group of independent researchers working in the field of participatory action research, health, and cultural development with Indigenous young people as co-researchers and community-based partners

Represented by: Andrew Hatala, Darrien Morton

NIGAANII WABISKI MIKANAK OGICHIDAA (NWMO), LEADING WHITE TURTLE WARRIORS: a collective of urban Indigenous youth engaged in



Represented by: Quinton Delorme, Kakeka Thundersky, Ronald Gamblin, Charlene Hudson

LAB FACILITATION & DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATION

SHIFT COLLABORATIVE: a cooperative offering strategy, coaching, leadership development and tools to support community and organizational change processes related to social and environmental challenges

Represented by: Stacy Barter

LAB STEWARDSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

FEARLESS R2W: an Indigenous-led community organization supporting families dealing with Manitoba's child welfare system through education, advocacy, and support

Represented by: Michael Champagne, Mary Lund Burton, John Morrisette, Rafael Terrain, Quinn Conlon

FUNDING SUPPORT

CANADIAN MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION: Administering National Housing Strategy funding through their Solutions Lab program

CANADIAN INSTITUTES OF HEALTH RESEARCH: Supporting the Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa research component and additional project support through the University of Manitoba, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences

INNOWEAVE, A PROGRAM OF J.W. MCCONNELL FAMILY FOUNDATION: Supporting Developmental Evaluation and additional coaching from Solutions Lab Consultant Stacy Barter

HOUSING SOLUTIONS

For Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg

Address the issues of housing insecurity & homelessness
Indigenous youth in Winnipeg face when they age out of the child welfare system at age 18

WHAT IS A SOLUTIONS LAB?
process that provides funding and expert consultants to help solve complex housing problems using innovation methods and tools.

SPRING 2019 - SUMMER 2020

OUR PROJECT
explore needs of Indigenous youth in Winnipeg who have grown up in the care of Manitoba's child welfare system and who are at the point where their institutional supports are removed & they face a high probability of entering into a cycle of poverty and housing insecurity or homelessness.

GET INVOLVED IF YOU...

- ARE OR WERE IN THE SYSTEM
- ARE WORKING IN THE SYSTEM
- ARE 'AROUND' THE SYSTEM

ACTIVITIES

- YOUTH ENGAGEMENT
- BI-MONTHLY COMMUNITY REPORT BACKS
- 1-ON-1 INTERVIEWS
- TARGETED WORKSHOPS
- SYMPOSIUMS

\$122,666
1 OF 12 PROJECTS FUNDED
FROM THE NATIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY

OUR HOPE
solutions that are co-developed in this process will be taken up by decision makers to close the gaps and further reduce the number of young people facing homelessness year over year.

CONTACT US!
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Fearless R2W
info@fearlessr2w.ca
Aboriginal Youth Opportunities
info@ayomovement.com

HTFC
WE ARE HAPPY TO DO THIS WORK WITH THE SUPPORT OF MANY PARTNERS. EXTRA LOVE TO:
Ato! University of Manitoba
Fearless R2W
WWW.FEARLESSR2W.CA/HOUSING

@housingwpg
@housingwpg

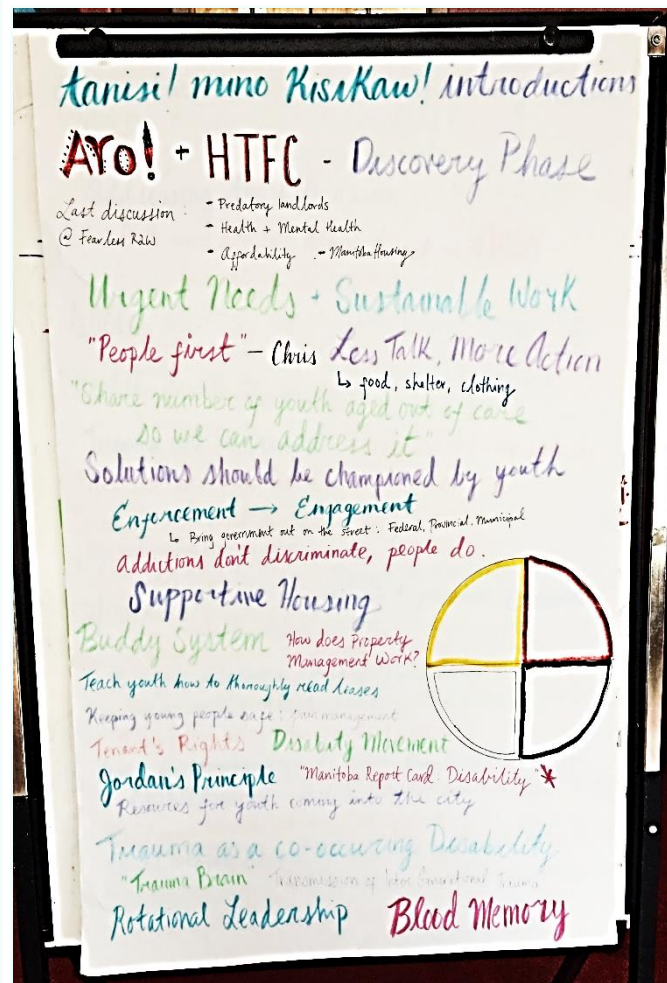
METHODOLOGY & KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION

Our Approach

Guided by several principles, our Lab methodology incorporated *social innovation lab*, *storycatching*, and *developmental evaluation* approaches to collaboratively explore specific needs of Indigenous youth in Winnipeg who have grown up in foster care and are at the point of aging out where institutional supports are removed. On an ongoing basis throughout the Lab, but especially at the beginning, we centred the voices of Indigenous young people and ensured Lab learnings were integrated, exchanged, and translated into action. Employing a variety of methods, tools, and sensibilities, we approached this challenge from different perspectives and worldviews, including those who:

- are or were in the system (youth in care, aging out of care or aged out of care)
- are working "in" the system (child welfare workers, service providers, administrators, policymakers, etc.)
- are working "around" the system (e.g. advocates, families, community organizers, housing professionals, etc.)

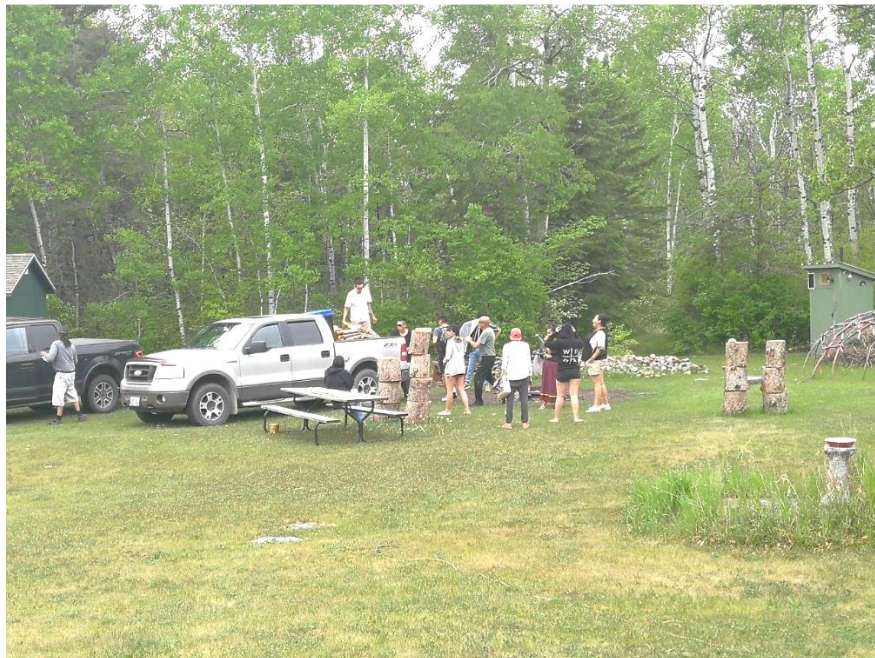
Through our engagements we aimed to build bridges of empathy and provide advocates, service providers, policymakers, and community members with a more complete picture of the systems impacting Indigenous youth aging out of care. The co-creation of solutions is intended to be scaled up among decision-makers and scaled out by communities to close service gaps and reduce the number of Indigenous youth facing housing insecurity and homelessness once they age out of Manitoba's child welfare system.



Social innovation labs: a dynamic process that brings together diverse stakeholders to address complex social problems involving iterative and emergent research, experimentation, prototyping, and solutions testing.

Storycatching: a culture-based approach that treats research as a ceremony, including listening, witnessing and feeling, and prioritizes relationship-based practices and centres Indigenous and local wisdom and knowledges.

Developmental evaluation: an embedded, continuous and learning-centred evaluation approach that assists the development of social innovations and change initiatives in complex and uncertain environments.



Beginning the Lab with a sweat lodge ceremony with youth aging out of care in Libau, Manitoba

Our Principles

Relational Accountability

We remain mutually accountable to all our relations to all kinds of life, past, present, and future. Ongoing and genuine relationship-building and strengthening supports the creation of trust, respect, reciprocity, and transparency to ensure relational accountability. They are always approached as a ceremony with high spiritual and moral integrity.

Two-Eyed Seeing

We equally respect the contributions and co-existence of Indigenous and Western paradigms by creating an ethical space of engagement while simultaneously centering and privileging local knowledges, voices, methods, and experiences.

Indigenous Self-Determination & Sovereignty

We recognize urban Indigenous Peoples' inherent and treaty rights to self-determination (autonomy) and sovereignty (non-interference) at all stages of engagement and collaboration through allyship and rotational leadership.

Honoring & Celebrating

We engage as humans first to distinguish the importance of laughter, humility, helping, feasting, and the role of honoring and celebration. While acting on the underlying sources of disadvantage and exclusion impacting Indigenous youth aging out of care, we simultaneously honor and celebrate the strengths and welcoming nature of local communities as well as the sacred stories and gifts we all share.

Capacity Building & Mentorship

We ensure enough time and resources are available for intergenerational and interdisciplinary capacity-building through mentorship, training, personal healing, and shared learning. We recognize, value, and compensate the expertise and labor of those offering technical and experiential knowledge based on systems literacy and lived experience.

Holistic Systems Thinking, Knowledge Sharing & Collective Action

We seek to capture and understand complex factors impacting Indigenous youth homelessness and housing insecurity as well as related demonstrations of local advocacy, activism, and resurgence. We recognize the interconnectedness of the Medicine Wheel and the significance of social and Indigenous determinants of health, wellness, and safety. Despite needing to understand these complex perspectives, knowledge must remain pragmatic to produce relevant individual and collective actions.

Cultural Safety & Reclamation

We create a safe space for shared learning and action that recognizes and accounts for unequal power relations, history, and Indigenous rights to avoid pan-Indigenization, perpetuation of stereotypes, and marginalization or appropriation of Indigenous and local knowledges and Peoples. We further contribute to processes of reclaiming cultural identity, kinship relations, and land occupation.

In addition to principles we developed for the Lab, we incorporated values used by Fearless R2W when delivering community-based education and advocacy programming and supports. These values are a result of 6 years of working and learning with the community on how best to support families dealing with the challenges of Manitoba's child welfare system.

Fearless R2W MB Child Welfare Education & Advocacy

WE ARE A CIRCLE OF SUPPORT AND VALUE
ONE ANOTHER AS ONE FAMILY
WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN (HEART, MIND,
BODY, SOUL)
WE AGREE TO DISAGREE WITH KINDNESS
WE BELIEVE LAUGHTER IS MEDICINE
WE BELIEVE IT IS ALL OF OUR
RESPONSIBILITY TO TAKE CARE OF ALL OF
THE CHILDREN ALL OF THE TIME
WE ENCOURAGE EACH PERSON TO FIND AND
SHARE THEIR GIFTS WITH US
WE WELCOME DIFFERENT APPROACHES,
OPINIONS AND STYLES
WE WILL NOT GOSSIP OR UNDERMINE ONE
ANOTHER BUT SPEAK WELL OF EACH OTHER
AND COMMUNICATE ANY CONCERNS
DIRECTLY TO THE PEOPLE INVOLVED
WE WILL LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER



Our Methodology

METHODOLOGY KEY

Bi-monthly Community Consultations: *Ongoing bi-monthly community gatherings to update, consult and inform the advancement of the Lab process with diverse stakeholders*

Informal Stakeholder Meetings & Engagement: *Ongoing individual and informal meetings and engagement with relevant stakeholders*

Cultural & Ceremonial Activities: *Ongoing culture-based opportunities for engagement among youth participants and researchers (e.g. medicine picking, berry picking, sweat lodge ceremonies, beading workshops, sharing circles, midnight medicine walks, Aging Out Party)*

Research Capacity-Building: *Ongoing culture-based training and mentorship among youth storycatchers to build research capacity related to research methods, ethics, ceremony, and knowledge translation*

Developmental Evaluation: *Ongoing developmental evaluation meetings with coordinators and the wider Lab leadership team to reflect, reevaluate, and enhance Lab processes and goals*

Youth Conversations: *Ongoing one-on-one conversations with youth with lived experience using a semi-structured interview guide*

Social Media Engagement & Website Development: *Ongoing social media engagement and website development to update, consult, network and exchange knowledge produced throughout the lab process*

Bi-annual Lab Leadership Team Meetings: *A bi-annual Lab Leadership Team meeting to update, consult and make collective decisions among Lab partners*

Youth Talking Circle: *A one-time youth talking circle to identify the needs and aspirations of Indigenous youth aging out of care and define expectations of the Lab process*

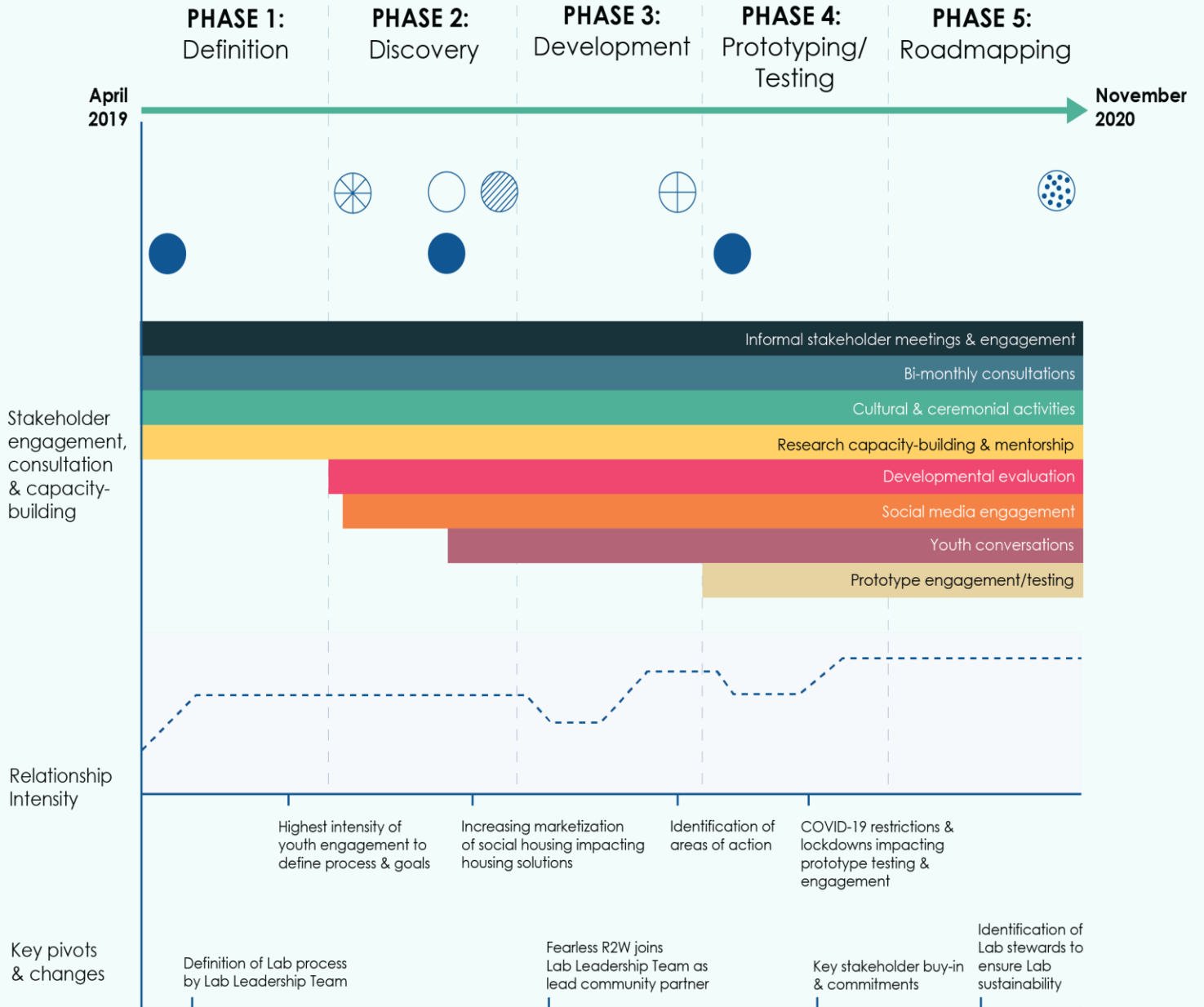
Systems Mapping: *Ongoing process which included a focused workshop, which was built on and refined in consecutive phases, to identify and visually map out the interactions between Indigenous youth aging out of care, system components and actors*

Communities of Practice Meeting: *A one-time meeting to widely engage and solicit expertise/information from relevant housing and child welfare stakeholders working “in” and “around” the system*

Ideas-to-action Workshop: *A one-time workshop to translate Discovery Phase findings among diverse stakeholders and develop questions to inform the creation of prototypes*

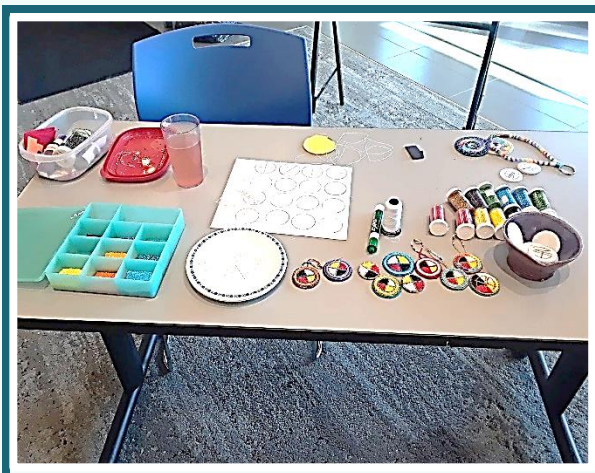
Prototype Engagement & Testing: *Ongoing prototype engagement, testing, sense-making, and reflection led by teams composed of 2 co-leads and 3-4 team members*

Roadmapping Workshop & Celebration: *A workshop to share the final roadmap produced through the Lab process with next steps and celebrate and honor major accomplishments and successes*



Key

- Lab leadership meetings
- Systems mapping workshop
- ⊕ Ideas-to-action workshop
- ⊗ Roadmapping workshop & celebration
- ⊗ Youth talking circle
- ⊗ Communities of Practice meeting



Beading workshop with youth aging out of care at the Merchants Corner, Winnipeg



Bi-monthly Consultation at Meet Me at the Bell Tower, Winnipeg



Bi-monthly Consultation at Fearless R2W, Winnipeg



Systems Mapping Design Jam at HTFC, Winnipeg



Winnipeg Rental Network's Communities of Practice meeting, Winnipeg



Ideas-to-action workshop at United Way, Winnipeg

Summary of Developmental Evaluation Reflections

WHAT WORKED WELL?

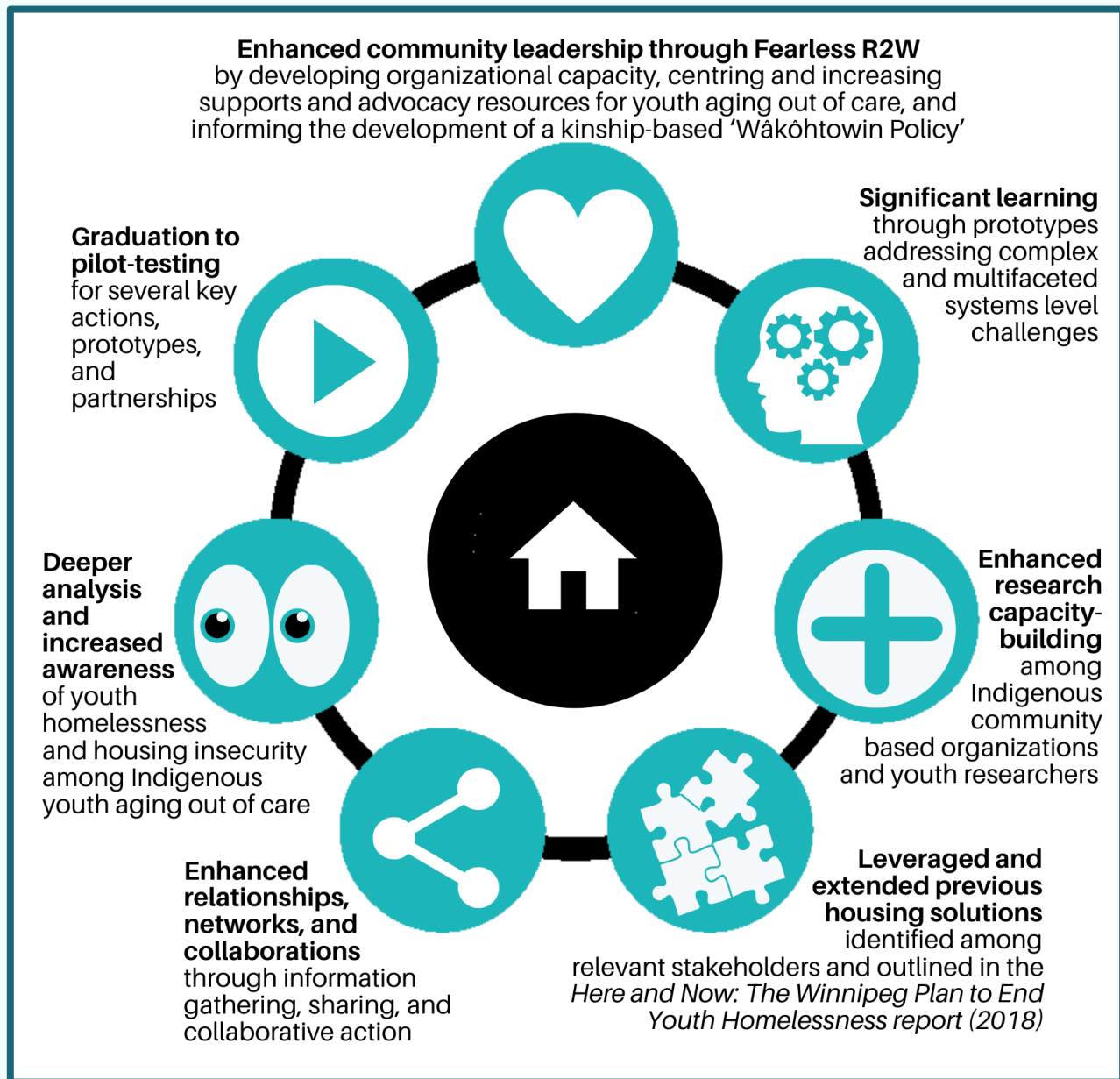
- 🏠 *Investing in relationship-strengthening, trust-building, and reciprocity to work across scales.*
- 🏠 *Building on strong and existing community relationships and community development work with a focus on the strengths and capacities of relevant community helpers.*
- 🏠 *Centering Indigenous youth and community voices, and embedding Lab activities in existing community spaces and priorities.*
- 🏠 *Ensuring the ability for Lab partners, stakeholders, helpers, and relatives to work within flexible boundaries that allowed for self-organizing.*
- 🏠 *Securing strong partnerships and collaborations among diverse stakeholders to ensure strong collaborative leadership and commitment to adequately support and steward prototype development.*
- 🏠 *Assuming a holistic, culturally grounded, and value-based approach to understand housing challenges for Indigenous youth aging out of care.*

WHAT WAS CHALLENGING?

- 🏠 *Upholding Indigenous self-determination (control and ownership) and sovereignty (non-interference) with limited time to interpret, centre, and follow Indigenous voice among a diverse composition of Lab funders, partners, and relevant stakeholders.*
- 🏠 *Defining unclear boundaries on what 'community' means to adequately scope, target, and address the challenge within an urban Indigenous context where jurisdictional ambiguities exist.*
- 🏠 *Building youth-inclusive spaces for mentorship and capacity-building while needing to meet Lab milestones and produce knowledge outputs.*
- 🏠 *Balancing process and action given the urgency of the Lab Challenge and limited resources.*
- 🏠 *Working on long-term change within a short-term project.*
- 🏠 *Adapting Lab processes to various structural and environmental forces, including: a global pandemic, shifting organizational landscapes shaping Indigenous youth, increased public awareness on youth aging out of care, and government austerity measures directly impacting social and market housing.*



Summary of Key Lab Outcomes



LAB HIGHLIGHTS

APR 2019 - NOV 2020

CHECK OUT HIGHLIGHTS OF
WHAT WE ACCOMPLISHED
WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE
VILLAGE

7

prototypes formally tested



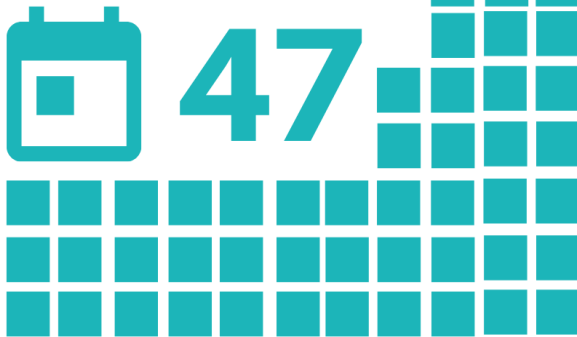
knowledge products created (so far)



4 Indigenous youth
formally employed



major knowledge exchange
& action events

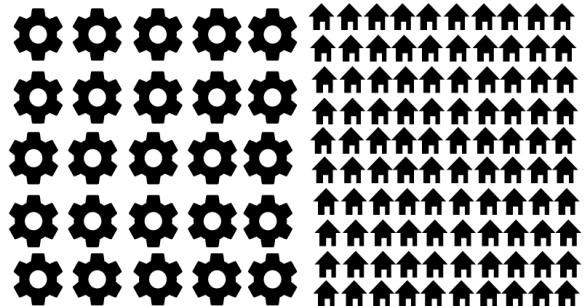


agencies,
organizations &
champions



PROTOTYPE

ENTIRE LAB



25

100

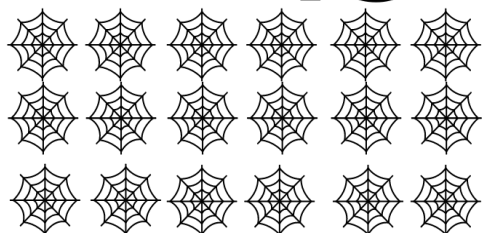
youth engaged (aging out or aged out)



60

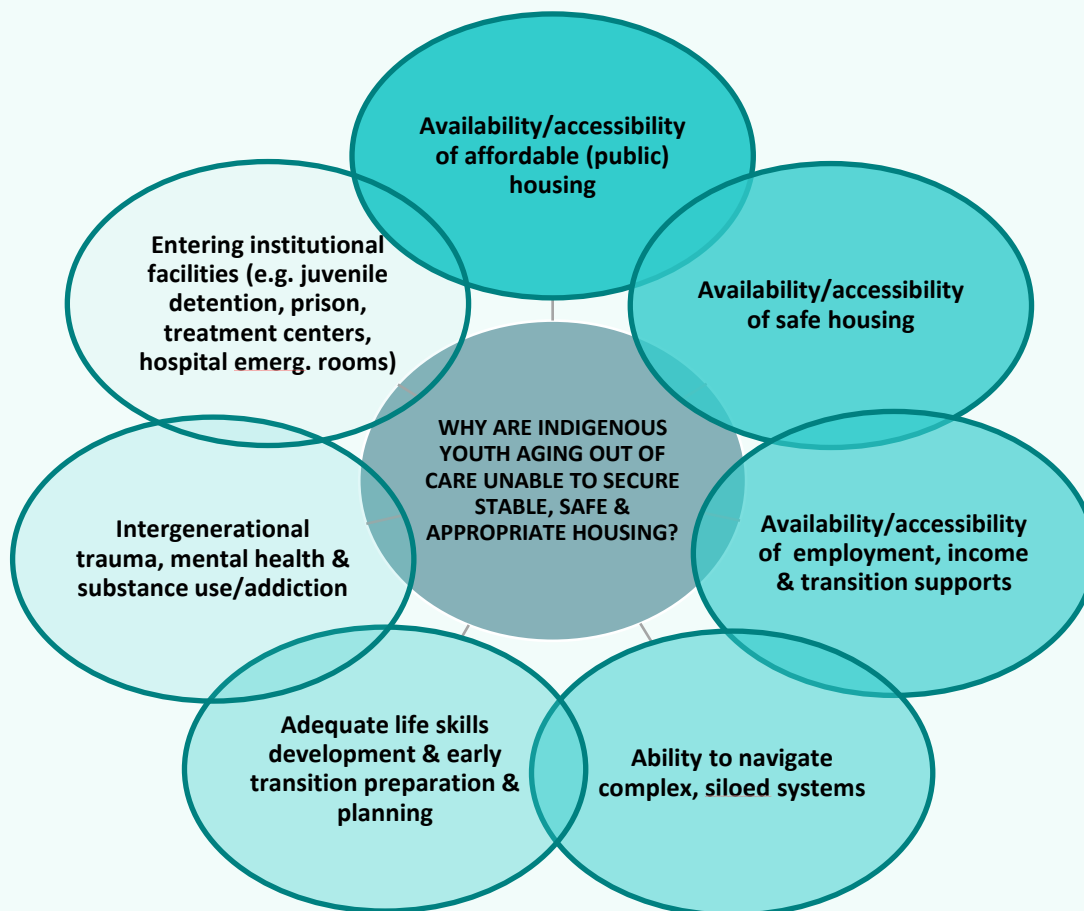
story catching
events
(youth interviews)

18+








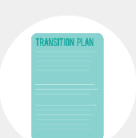
MAJOR FINDINGS







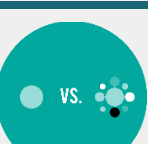
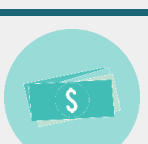
The root causes of homelessness and housing insecurity among urban Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg are entrenched in colonization, land dispossession, institutional racism, discrimination, and the decreasing systemic incentives to care for youth as they grow older. They are characterized by ongoing failures of systems and individuals to unconditionally love, support and care for young people's sense of cultural identity, health, and overall well-being. We identified various factors directly preventing Indigenous youth aging out of care from securing stable and culturally appropriate housing.



Key Opportunities to Reduce Homelessness & Housing Insecurity

Throughout Phase 2 (Discovery), several considerations emerged to broadly identify key opportunities to reduce homelessness and housing insecurity among Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg. They relate to various aspects of policies, services, and programs located in various systems or sectors, including: child welfare, housing, health care and harm reduction, criminal justice, education, and other systems impacting community development and providing social support. Such opportunities informed and guided key questions about the challenge at hand and areas for action during prototype development and testing. While it was not possible to respond to all of these opportunities within the scope of our 20-month project, they are important when considering the implementation of future solutions and actions.

	Ensure policies, services, and supports are delivered holistically to address complex needs
	Ensure that leaving care does not prioritize sudden “discharge” over gradual “transitioning”
	Ensure necessary services are not denied because of “double dipping”
	Recognize and account for how institutional staff, workers, and foster parents become family to youth
	Ensure policies, services, and programs are culturally safe and appropriate
	Ensure earlier transition planning and celebrate “rites of passage” during different stages of transition

	"Programs and services don't change people, good relationships do!"
	Reduce periods of waiting when communicating between systems and accessing services or programs
	Centralize resources for ease of systems navigation, coordinated access, and continuity of care
	Ensure multiple options are available when accessing diverse services and programs that do not limit the choices of youth
	Increase the age of extensions of care (<i>Agreements with Young Adults</i>) from 21 to 25 ¹⁶
	Develop youth-friendly and culture-based indicators of success during the aging out process that move beyond educational achievements
	Ensure government funding and supports that encourage and reward both interdependence or independence
	Ensure financial supports through income assistance are equivalent to those of extensions of care when the option is unavailable

¹⁶ See the short film documentary "Aging Up" (2016) produced by the *25 Not 21 Collective* as they advocated for the extension of government supports up to 25 years old for youth aging out of care in Manitoba. Retrieved from <https://yt.ax/watch/aging-up-short-film-documentary-by-25not21-17804117/>

Key Insights on How Systems Perpetuate Homelessness & Housing Insecurity

The key insights below demonstrate how systems and individuals—even with the best of intentions—perpetuate the ongoing crisis of youth homelessness and housing insecurity among Indigenous youth aging out of care.

- 🏠 **Criminalizing survival:** *the coping strategies (e.g. stealing, gang involvement, drug use, etc.) youth aging out of care may use to survive and respond to systemic inequities and injustices (e.g. poverty, trauma, family separation, etc.) are viewed as illegal and criminalized by policies, services, and personal attitudes.*
- 🏠 **Pathologizing mobility:** *an inflexible requirement of policies, services, and attitudes focus on housing stability, which views “unstable” or “transient” housing as a pathological condition that does not positively consider and encourage residential, geographical, historical, and familial mobility for youth aging out of care.*
- 🏠 **Labelling & marginalizing help-seeking:** *the help-seeking behaviors of youth aging out of care often lead to (negative) labels being placed on them for the purposes of accessing services that further cause stigma, marginalization, and distrust, thus increasing the likelihood of not seeking needed help from others again in the future.*
- 🏠 **Forbidding generosity:** *the generous nature of many youth aging out of care to help, or receive informal help from biological parents, siblings, peers or street family, is often discouraged and deemed inappropriate by policies and services.*
- 🏠 **Penalizing interdependence:** *following the previous key insight on generosity, policies and services are constructed to create dependency prior to youth aging out of care and expect full independence once exiting care. When forming interdependent relationships with others for emotional and financial reasons, they more often than not lead to penalties and restrictions from further accessing necessary supports.*

Key Questions & Areas for Action

At our Ideas-to-Action Workshop during Phase 3 (Development), diverse stakeholders and relatives were engaged in learning about what we had heard and witnessed throughout Phase 2. They then helped to identify key questions to inform relevant areas for prototyping, testing, and action. These areas were named and defined by working across different experiences and perspectives, shared dialogue, and collective decision-making.

HEALING & CULTURE

- How might we enhance culture-based healing resources for youth aging out of care that prevent identity-shame early on, promote stable connections and belonging, and enable the sharing of personal gifts?

TRANSITION HOUSING

- How might we support youth aging out of care with Indigenous youth-led transitional housing models?

LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- How might we create an environment that enables youth aging out of care to develop life skills in order to attain a sense of home?

FAMILY SUPPORTS

- How might we assist CFS-involved or vulnerable families to identify the support they need by building trust with families who need help?

COORDINATED ACCESS

- How might we keep systems accountable to ensure coordinated access when providing wrap-around supports and services to youth aging out of care?



PROTOTYPE PROFILES & ACTION PLANS

Key questions and areas for action from the Ideas-to-Action Workshop were mobilized during Phase 4 (Prototyping/ Testing) to develop prototypes that would move to testing. These prototypes were selected based on their relevance, potential for impact, and capacity to address multifaceted aspects of the housing challenge in a holistic way. Over a period of 4 months, prototypes were led by teams of 3-4 individuals with various affiliations to diverse organizations and community groups. The teams were composed of two co-leads, one of which was an Indigenous youth or person with lived experience. Additionally, a Youth Advisory Circle made up of Indigenous youth who are aging or aged out of care moved across and guided the prototyping teams. Each team engaged a wider network of stakeholders and relatives at a family, neighborhood, municipal, provincial, and national level to gather feedback on solutions, iterate, and make sense of emerging learnings.

PROTOTYPE SUMMARY RESULTS KEY

Partnership Identification: *the degree to which potential implementation agencies, partners, organizations and community groups have been identified.*

Funding Identification: *the degree to which potential funding agencies, partners or grants have been identified.*

Relationship Development: *the degree to which necessary relationships have been established based on trust, respect and commitment to move ideas toward pilot testing and/or implementation.*

Feasibility: *the extent to which a new innovation can be successfully used or carried out within a given agency or context.*

Appropriateness: *the perceived fit, relevance, or compatibility of an innovation for a given context, setting, provider, or consumer; and/or perceived fit of the innovation to address a particular issue or problem.*

Acceptability: *the perception among implementation stakeholders that a given service, practice, or innovation is agreeable, meaningful, or beneficial.*

What is needed is some kind of transition, almost like an independent living because you have some people that might try to go back to their family. Some people don't have families, too. And some people might come from a good place where they felt safe, like Hands of Mother Earth for me, and go back to their family where it's f***ed up. You know? And if we could be set up to be out of care but still have someone that would be good, not just another social worker [...] just somebody there to help you get set up with EIA or employment. And I think you should be set up with whatever you need before you no longer have those supports that's supported everything throughout your life.

Lauren, 22 (transition planning)

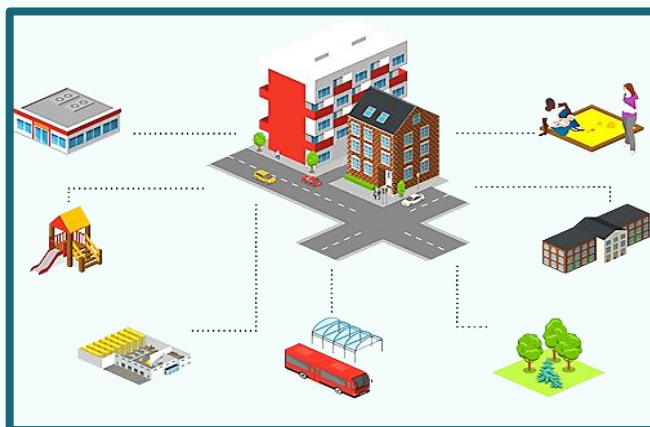
RESIDENTIAL TRANSITION HOUSE (PROTOTYPE #1)

What's the challenge?

An inadequate supply of accessible, safe, and culturally appropriate residential transition housing with wrap-around supports exists for Indigenous youth aging out of care.

What's the solution?

A residential, culturally safe, and harm-reduction-focused transition house with wrap-around supports to help Indigenous youth aging out of care transition into permanent and independent living arrangements. The solution is a direct response to the lack of culture-based transition housing for Indigenous youth aging out of care.



Prototype team members

DYLON MARTIN
(YIMBY Winnipeg)
ADAM KROEKER
(HTFC Planning and Design)
BRANDY KOWAL
(Shawenim Abinoojii)
ANTHONY NIIGAANII
(Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre)
MARKUS HEAD
(community helper)

What did we prototype/test?

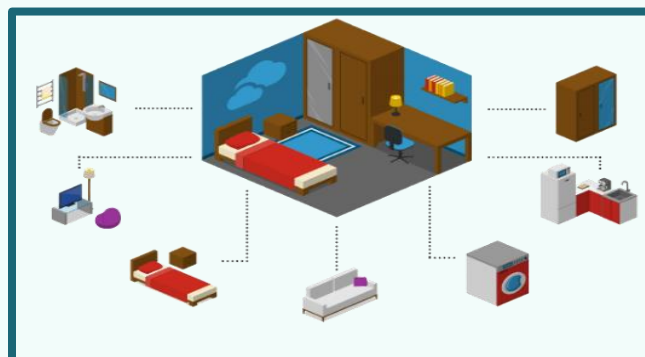
- 🏠 Feasibility to construct/manage a residential transition house
- 🏠 Appropriateness of a residential transition house design among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Acceptability of a residential transition house among Indigenous youth aging out of care

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Housing/zoning professionals
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Rapid feedback session



Key learnings

- Transition housing is a major priority for Indigenous youth aging out of care;
- Multi-unit building preferred over single-family houses;
- Mixed housing should accommodate youth with/without children;
- Prioritize close proximity to educational facilities.

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Identification of potential funding sources	Write RFP to find developer to partner with / Speak to potential funders / apply for grants	Obtain funding, land, permits, etc.	Start construction
Partners & collaborators needed	Unidentified collaborations to lead the development	Identify collaborators willing to join a development or management team	Identify architects and contractors	Building managers
Resources needed	Funding for development	Planning support	Fundraising support	Long-term fiscal agreements with public sector, organizations, and charities
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	Does the "champion" need to be a registered charity?	Do youth approve of our refined prototype (re-testing)?	What type of supporting info would funders require?	Who are likely funders in this policy climate?

It took a long time to get accepted into Manitoba Housing. I do respect they do a needs-based type thing. But you choose areas of the city where you're willing to move. And so neighborhoods that have a safer environment—like less poverty—have a longer waitlist, because those are in higher demand. Whereas you could be housed within Manitoba Housing really fast if you choose to live in high-crime areas. But again, that's like an attack on poverty and unresolved trauma. So Manitoba Housing was good and I appreciated it, and I would definitely use it again if my life brought me to that position. But there's not enough housing. And the government isn't doing anything to change poverty rates and make housing affordable. If anything, they're making it worse. So we're just going to see an increase of the housing crisis.

Erica, 30 (housing accessibility)

COORDINATED ACCESS TO SOCIAL HOUSING (PROTOTYPE #2)

What's the challenge?

Indigenous youth aging out of care experience perceived and structural barriers to accessing safe and affordable social housing.

What's the solution?

A strategy to ensure coordinated access for unoccupied social housing across various levels of policy, advocacy and service delivery. The solution is a direct response to the marketization of social housing and inadequate prioritization of youth aging out of care on housing wait lists.

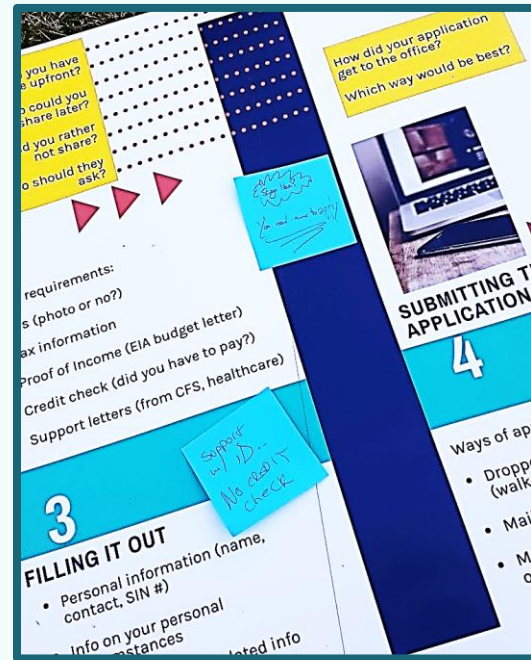
Prototype team members

QUINN CONLON (Tenant-Landlord Corporation)

RAFAEL TERRAIN (Fearless R2W)

JACQUELINE RIEU (Fearless R2W)

ALEX LACELLE (Fearless R2W)



What did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Appropriateness of social housing among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Acceptability of social housing among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Sustainability of social housing advocacy to impact policy

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Housing sector professionals
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Rapid feedback session
- 🏠 Youth survey

Key learnings

- 🌐 Youth aging out of care are not accessing social housing at high rates despite higher rates of homelessness and housing insecurity;
- 🌐 The greatest structural barrier to accessing social housing is the lack of housing stock;
- 🌐 Despite multiple access barriers, social housing should be considered a primary option;
- 🌐 Access to social housing cannot benefit youth without formal and informal supports.

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Identify host organization for a housing advocate dedicated to supporting youth aging out of care.	Create a job description, including housing search support and systems advocacy.	Hire an Indigenous youth aged out of care for the position or train them	Ensure housing advocate is adequately connected to the Housing Solutions team to advocate for a centralized social housing waitlist initiative and other campaigns.
Partners & collaborators needed	North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp.	North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp.	North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp.	North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp., other advocacy groups (Right 2 Housing, Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association, etc.)
Resources needed	Willingness to host housing advocate	Willingness to host housing advocate	Funding for housing advocate wages	Willingness to engage in policy advocacy
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	Can we find an organization willing to support us with this work?	Is this a realistic job description, or is it too much work? If so, how should it be adapted?	Is this a realistic job description, or is it too much work? If so, how should it be adapted?	How should advocacy for access to social housing proceed to have policy impacts?

When you're in care you already know how to do so many things by yourself because you kind of have to. But then when you turn 18 all like the technical things that people have been doing for you, you have to do by yourself. But the difference is you can't be like "Hey mom, how do you do this?" I wish I could just send someone a text and say: "Hey, how do I do this quick fast?"

Patricia, 21 (social support)

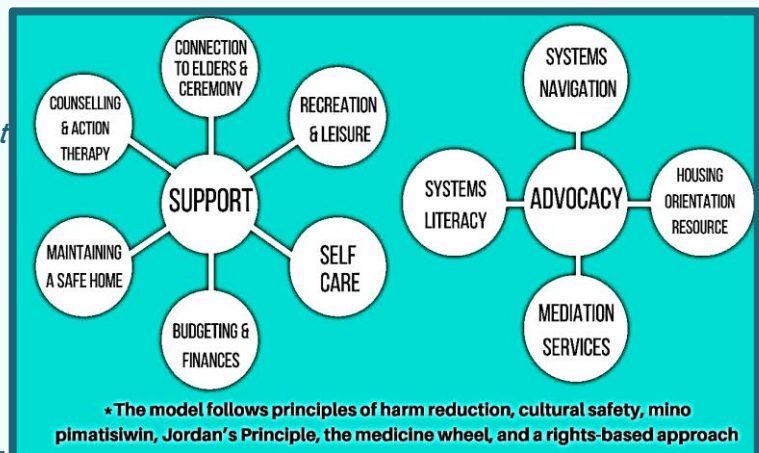
KINSHIP SUPPORT INITIATIVE (PROTOTYPE #3)

What's the challenge?

Although physical housing is an important determinant of health, wellness, and safety, alone it does not adequately support the holistic and culture-based needs of Indigenous youth aging out of care. They require additional support to strengthen identity and systems literacy.

What's the solution?

The Kinship Support Initiative (KSI) provides formal and informal wrap-around supports and advocacy for Indigenous youth aging out of care while they secure and maintain housing. The solution is a direct response to develop an "Aunties & Uncles" program that provides youth aging out of care with informal family type supports.



Prototype team members

DARRIEN MORTON

(University of Manitoba)

QUINTON DELORME

(Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa)

MARY LUND BURTON

(Fearless R2W)

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Service providers
- 🏠 Housing professionals
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families

What did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Partnership identification for KSI model
- 🏠 Feasibility of implementing KSI model
- 🏠 Appropriateness of KSI model among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Acceptability of KSI model among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Sustainability of a kinship network to deliver support

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Youth sharing circle
- 🏠 Rapid feedback session

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard

Keep testing/adapt

Graduate to pilot

Go to scale

Key learnings

- The meanings of kinship should be context specific, informal, and relationship-based;
- Provision of day-to-day supports or services cannot be performed without ensuring advocacy resources are available for youth as well;
- Prioritizing housing supports and advocacy resources for kin (e.g. grandparents) can impact positive outcomes for youth aging out of care.

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Established partnerships with organizations for different components of KSI model	Identify public or market rental housing providers for partnership	Establish a comprehensive network of support and advocacy resources for kin (e.g. siblings, grandparents, parents, street family)	Ensuring housing policies and services adopt kinship-based approaches.
Partners & collaborators needed	Fearless R2W, North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp., SEED Winnipeg, Ogijjiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin, and, kin, helpers & knowledge keepers	Housing organizations and management companies	Appropriate and acceptable organizations	North End Community Renewal Corp., Tenant-Landlord Corp., and other housing/child welfare advocates
Resources needed	Willingness to link youth to appropriate existing resources	Willingness to offer housing resources	Minimal resources needed to prototype kin supports	Funding for housing advocate; willingness to engage in policy advocacy
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	What are the challenges and opportunities of delivering and sustaining a KSI in practice?	How do we engage housing providers when delivering kinship supports/ advocacy resources?	What are the strengths and challenges of providing additional support to kin, and how do these relational supports impact youth outcomes?	How do we ensure kinships-based approaches are taken up through housing provision, policy and advocacy?

Finding housing when I turned 18 was scary because I didn't know what to do at all. I didn't know where to pay the rent or pay the bills or anything like that. But I was still going to school so I had questions answered there, that was helpful. But just that sort of immediate, "You've got to leave now," and then like, "Oh, I've got to scramble to find a place." I didn't know how to look through rental guides or websites or anything like that—websites that do exist out there and are very helpful [...] So I think it is also having your friends, having your extended relatives, organizations, next door neighbors or just word-of-mouth in the community, whether that's at events or at school; people who know somebody or something. All of those are helpful.

Markus, 31 (systems navigation)

YOUTH AGING OUT WEBSITE (PROTOTYPE #4)

What's the challenge?

Currently there is no centralized and youth-friendly website in Manitoba designed to help youth aging out of care navigate resources and services available to them.

What's the solution?

A youth aging out website that offers the necessary tools to help youth and service providers navigate relevant housing, social support, and advocacy resources and services. The solution explored opportunities to adapt an aging out website from British Columbia.

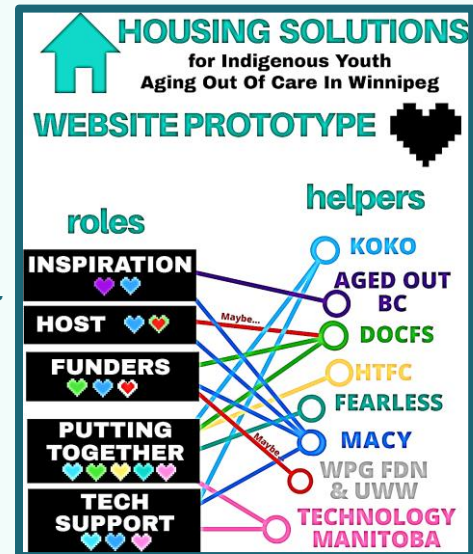
Prototype team members

ZOË MAGER (*HTFC Planning & Design*)

MICHAEL CHAMPAGNE (*Fearless R2W*)

CHRIS CLACIO (*Aboriginal Youth Opportunities*)

ANDREW KOHAN (*community helper*)



What did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Funding identification for website development
- 🏠 Partnership identification for hosting a website
- 🏠 Feasibility of website development
- 🏠 Appropriateness of website content and design among youth and website hosts
- 🏠 Sustainability of website maintenance and upkeep

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Child welfare advocates/agencies
- 🏠 Technology sector professionals
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Rapid feedback session
- 🏠 Youth consultation

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

Key learnings

- Resources listed must include personal, non-official information for youth and by youth (i.e. “What do you need to know before you go in the door?”)
- General lack of culturally safe and appropriate resources in Manitoba;
- App development is too difficult to change and adapt compared to websites;
- Potential to work with changes at *Manitoba211*.

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Solidify partnership	Do further testing on how to develop a “Yelp” for services with Youth Ambassador Advisory Squad	Develop the website	Transition to youth-upkeep and ambassadors
Partners & collaborators needed	Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Service, Fearless R2W TechMB, BC’s AgedOut	Funders (e.g. University of Winnipeg, Winnipeg Foundation); youth capacity/skills building program	Indigenous youth to train with website developer (e.g. Hello Social Co.)	Indigenous youth to upkeep and manage website
Resources needed	Willingness to host website	Funding a website builder	Funding to support website operations and upkeep	Funding to support website upkeep and operations
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	Who are our partners and what are our roles? Do we want to build a new site or use BC’s AgedOut structure?	How do we create a suitable website in MB? How do we ensure youth have all the information they need about services? (safety, steps needed, who’s helpful or harmful)	How do we build a sustainable and accurate website?	Is this working? How can we improve what isn’t? Do we want to grow/expand/scale the website?

I couldn't sit at home, right? I needed to pay rent. I was able to find some employment, but it was never enough. It was nothing that would last long. I'd constantly be having to look for other ways to make money, and that's what kind of led me back into selling drugs, because I just wasn't making enough. I was way faster at making money selling drugs than working 9 to 5.

Candace, 36 (employment)

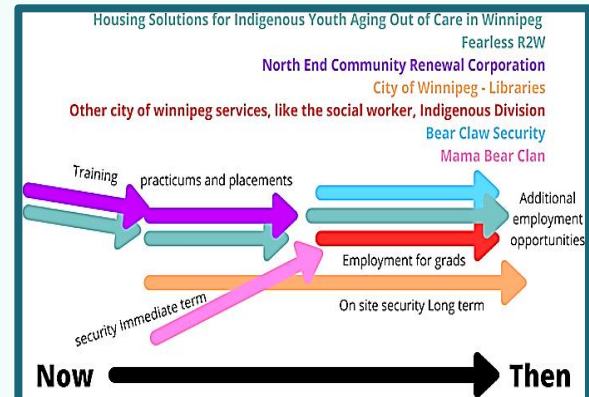
COMMUNITY SAFETY HOST SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (PROTOTYPE #5)

What's the challenge?

Financial insecurity and lack of meaningful and supported employment opportunities affect Indigenous youth aging out of care to attain appropriate and secure housing.

What's the solution?

Supporting life skill development through a social enterprise model, the Community Safety Host (CSH) prototype supports an alternative to library security guards and provides employment opportunities to ensure career mentorship, employment training, and financial security. The solution is a direct response to increased policing and security at public libraries that is viewed as unfavorable by the general public.



Prototype team members

MICHAEL CHAMPAGNE (*Fearless R2W*)

ANNY CHEN (*University of Manitoba, Service Learning*)

LISA FORBES (*SEED Winnipeg*)

KALEN TAYLOR (*Purpose Construction*)



What did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Partnership identification to manage a CSH employment program
- 🏠 Funding identification to employ CSH
- 🏠 Feasibility of CSH employment program and training
- 🏠 Appropriateness of CSH positions and security training among Indigenous youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Acceptability of CSH positions among Indigenous youth aging out of care

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Public Library stakeholders
- 🏠 Library Safety working group
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Community & youth survey
- 🏠 Rapid feedback session

NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

Key learnings

- There is interest for alternatives to security guards by public libraries, social enterprise innovators, and concerned citizens;
- There is concern among Indigenous youth aging out of care that the role of CSH may be tokenized and exploited as another form of policing;
- Attention must be paid to potential risks of re-traumatization in the work environment;
- North End Community Renewal Corporation has an enhanced security guard training program that requires culturally appropriate adaptation;
- St. Boniface Library is a suitable placement to pilot the prototype as they incorporate people-centered and harm reduction approaches.

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Apply for funding	Develop CSH curriculum Develop library practicum	Employ youth at library as part of safety team	Establish community safety contracts with library and two other mid-size organizations
Partners & collaborators needed	NECRC, Fearless R2W	NECRC, Millennium for All, Winnipeg Public Library	Winnipeg Public Library	Winnipeg Public Library, large community events, and other mid-size community organizations
Resources needed	In-kind staff hours to apply for funding	Adapt NECRC security guard curriculum Training for library staff Wages and mentors for paid practicum placements	Pilot evaluation of CSH initiative	References from Winnipeg Public Library
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	Are there funding opportunities to offer paid training and mentorship support?	Are Indigenous youth aging out of care interested in working as CSH? Does working as CSH offer a safe, meaningful, and sustainable opportunity for Indigenous youth aging out of care?	Are there sustainable employment opportunities following graduation?	Are there sufficient employers interested in hiring Indigenous youth aging out of care?

My first social worker was a total nut job. My parents even took her to court over something [...] I went through a couple of social workers for a very short period of time and didn't really get to know them that well. One of my most recent workers was just amazing. She was just out of school though and she had like fifty other kids to deal with. She'd never had an Extended Care kid, so she didn't really know what to do. But we bounced ideas off each other [and] she really did everything she could to help and I appreciate it. She left where she was working because she didn't feel comfortable. She felt like at any second they were just going to drop her, so she left and found a different job. But she made a point of even writing me a letter and it was so sweet. I think it's important to mention too, she learned as much from me as I could have from her, not just as a student, but as a caregiver too. I'm glad instability I've experienced in life can create solid ground for others to learn from.

Sharon, 19 (cultural competence)

INDEPENDENCE BOARD GAME (PROTOTYPE #6)

What's the challenge?

There exists a lack of knowledge on the experiences and realities of Indigenous youth aging out of care among those implementing policies and providing services and housing.

What's the solution?

A youth aging out board game that acts as a tool to educate and train service providers, social workers, housing advocates, and policy decision-makers on the experiences and realities of Indigenous youth aging out of care. The solution is a direct response to educate and build empathy among child welfare agency staff on the experiences and lives of Indigenous youth aging out of care.

Prototype team members

HANNAH OWCZAR (*University of Manitoba*)

DARRIEN MORTON (*University of Manitoba*)

MICHAEL CHAMPAGNE (*Fearless R2W*)

What did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Partnership identification to market/deliver the board game
- 🏠 Funding identification for board game production and training manual
- 🏠 Appropriateness of the board game among housing advocates and youth aging out of care
- 🏠 Acceptability of the board game among housing advocates and youth aging out of care

Who did we prototype/test with?

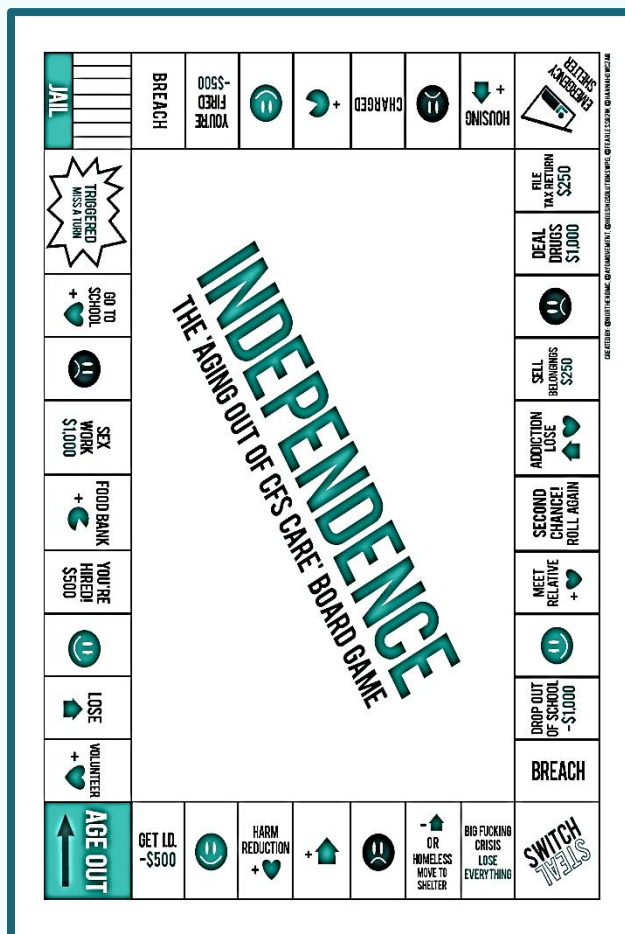
- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families
- 🏠 Housing advocates

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Community consultation

Key learnings

- 🎲 Increasing the complexity of the game enhances playability and engagement;
- 🎲 Card games can potentially be more meaningful than board games;
- 🎲 An educational board game cannot be delivered without appropriate facilitation/training.



NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

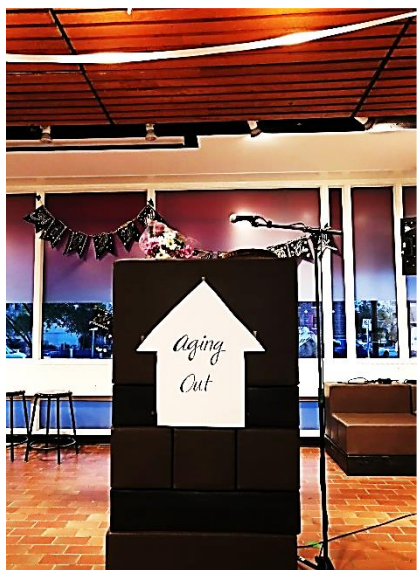
PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

ACTION PLAN	NOW	SOON	LATER	LONG-TERM
Main milestones	Finalized board game design	Create supplementary training manual	Test board game and training manual among Child welfare agencies	Mandate training on youth aging out of care across child welfare agencies
Partners & collaborators needed	University of Manitoba, Fearless R2W	Fearless R2W	CFS agencies	MACY, CFS Agencies
Resources needed	Funding	Funding	Willingness	Willingness
Questions we need to test & evaluate and learn about	How do service providers, social workers and decision-makers interact with the board game?	What is the cultural competency needs of service providers, social workers and decision-makers?	How does a youth aging out of care training manual impact service provision?	What barriers and facilitators exist to ensure the uptake of youth aging out of care cultural competency training?

They gave me money [up to 18], and then until I was 21. Then I had to figure it out on my own, which I did. But in that time, they didn't help me in that transition to the next stage of life. While transitioning, and at 21, they didn't do anything. They didn't teach me about healthy relationships, safe boundaries, about cultural connections. I didn't even meet my biological family.

Natasha, 24 (identity-building)

AGING OUT PARTY (PROTOTYPE #7)



Prototype team members

KAKEKA THUNDERSKY
(Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa)

ANNY CHEN
(University of Manitoba)

ZOË MAGER
(HTFC Planning & Design)

Who did we prototype/test with?

- 🏠 Youth aging/aged out of care
- 🏠 Community helpers & families
- 🏠 Mainstream media

How did we prototype/test?

- 🏠 Meetings & conversations
- 🏠 Hosting an Aging Out Party

Key learnings

- 🌟 The Aging Out Party should not be institutionalized but taken up by youth aging out of care independently with the necessary supports;
- 🌟 There are opportunities for child welfare agencies, organizations, and foster parents to celebrate and honor youth in their own ways as they age out of care. These may include celebrating 18th/21st birthdays; celebrating developmental stages of life; setting them up for transition; setting up savings accounts; ensuring culturally appropriate/ acceptable 'rites of passage,' and so on.
- 🌟 Celebrating and honoring life events should be connected to and encouraged by those providing kinship-based supports.

What's the challenge?

There are few opportunities for Indigenous youth to celebrate their transition out of care and honor their experiences, stories, and strengths.

What's the solution?

The Aging Out Party provides a space for ceremony to celebrate and honor Indigenous youth as they age out of care into adulthood with loved ones. The solution is a direct response to a young woman's belief that aging out of care should be a time for celebration and increasing awareness of the experiences of youth aging out of care, and not abandonment by systems and workers.



NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST

Discard	
Keep testing/adapt	
Graduate to pilot	
Go to scale	

PROTOTYPE RESULTS SUMMARY	HIGH	PARTIAL	LOW	FURTHER TESTING	N/A
Partnership identification					
Funding identification					
Relationship development					
Feasibility					
Appropriateness					
Acceptability					
Sustainability					

* The following prototype relates to the kinship supports and its uptake can be applied to the piloting/implementation of the Kinship Support Initiative model

ROADMAP & LOOKING FORWARD

Phase 5 (Roadmapping)—the final stage of the Lab—advanced the development of a Roadmap with key actions that will ensure the ongoing learning and implementation of solutions beyond the Housing Solutions Lab. This final phase was facilitated with the support of the Lab Leadership Team, Prototyping Team Leads, and a few relevant organizations looking to learn from, pilot, and/or implement potential solutions. This Roadmap considers, yet goes beyond, specific next steps for each prototype. Instead, it is organized around the following components: 1) *areas of impact*, 2) *key actions*, and 3) *potential & established collaborators*.



The Housing Solutions Lab launch in April 2019 at Meet Me at the Bell Tower in Winnipeg's North End

Furthermore, this final stage does not signify closure of the work undertaken over the past 20 months as well as the ancestral work in this territory over many generations prior to our Housing Solutions Lab. Rather, it is viewed as a continuation—an act of perseverance and resistance in the face of ongoing systemic adversity, harm, and injustice. Many of the next steps below identify concrete opportunities for continuing to move this work forward and implement solutions identified by the Village. At the same time, it has allowed us to consider alternative courses of action, leverage new and existing resources and relationships, and reimagine a set of collective goals to address homelessness and housing insecurity among Indigenous youth aging out of care in Winnipeg.

Indigenous Youth Aging Out of Care in Winnipeg



1. IMPACT AREAS


2. KEY ACTIONS

3. POTENTIAL & ESTABLISHED COLLABORATORS


Concluding Reflections & Lessons Learned

There are several concluding reflections we pondered, and from which lessons learned have emerged. Interpreting these lessons through the principles we defined earlier in our Lab process, we draw inspiration when naming them based on what worked well, what was challenging, what we overcame, and what we envision for the future of social innovation. As much as these lessons are based on experience, trial and error, and picking ourselves back up, they are equally our hopes and wishes of what we believe other Solutions Labs could look like and do that is in line with the spirit of social innovation; but, not always put into practice. While our solution ideas and Lab process were very much developed based on the specific place-based context of Winnipeg, we believe that these lessons, as well as the core of many of our solution ideas, have potential to be adapted, replicated, or scaled up and out within other territories and communities across Canada facing similar challenges. We offer these learnings to others that choose to pursue a similar journey.







RELATIONSHIPS: Strong, trusting, reciprocal, and flexible relationships should be responsive to stakeholder needs and are key to progress overall lab activities and goals. Relationships should be grounded in ceremony, followed through with moral integrity, and guided by a responsibility-based approach that asks us to do more than we anticipated in light of uncertainty and shifting contexts.



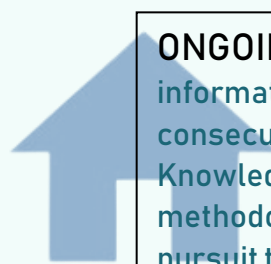
MAKING TIME: Adequate time is a necessity to ensure working across different perspectives and actions can be achieved, and urban Indigenous self-determination, sovereignty, and aspirations to build capacity and set a shared course of action can be defined and upheld.



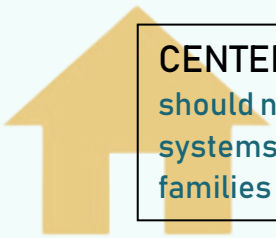
ROTATIONAL LEADERSHIP & COLLECTIVE ACTION: Ensure that roles and responsibilities are well-defined, adaptive, and build in rotational leadership to account for various capacities (e.g. resources, time, energy, etc.), unique goals, and cultivating commitment and sustainable collective action with diverse stakeholders involved in lab processes.



YOUTH VOICE: Centering youth voices during lab processes may not only mean listening to and witnessing youth perspectives and lived experience, but accepting that youth may not always want to speak up, share stories, or find value in certain goals, styles, and approaches.



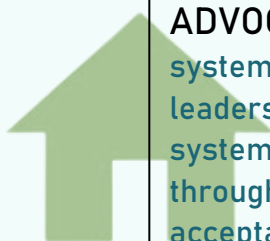
ONGOING KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION: Consider opportunities to carry out information gathering, prototyping, and action simultaneously, and not consecutively, even when iterative and emergent lab strategies are followed. Knowledge must be created and mobilized through the prioritization of methodological integrity and ethical relevance, and not through an unwavering pursuit to achieve methodological innovation and the discovery of something new.



CENTERING AGENCY & RESISTANCE: Incorporating a systems approach should not only focus on challenges of structural disadvantage and harm that systems perpetuate, but recognize the strengths and agency of individuals and families to resist and transform systems.



BUILDING KINSHIP NETWORKS: Assuming a kinship-based approach that ensures we relate to one another as relatives and family is key to addressing Indigenous youth homelessness and housing insecurity as a matter of strategy and action.



ADVOCACY & SYSTEM LITERACY: Incorporating advocacy and building systems literacy is indispensable during lab processes to enhance community leadership, move solutions into action, and actively put unwanted pressure on systems to change. Lab processes must be willing to talk back to systems through instigation, disruption, allyship, and with radical and non-judgmental acceptance of the stories and experiences of individuals and communities being served.



LAUGHTER IS MEDICINE: Addressing difficult and personal social challenges through 'hard-work' and 'heart-work' must be approached from a position that celebrates strengths, surfaces inspiration, prioritizes self-care, and uses laughter as a form of spiritual medicine.

APPENDIX

List of Lab Participants Engaged

INDIGENOUS YOUTH COLLECTIVES	Aboriginal Youth Opportunities Foster Up Mistitc Peyistowak Katisipowak Nigaanii Wabiski Mikanak Ogichidaa
HOUSING ORGANIZATIONS	End Homelessness Winnipeg Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba New Journey Housing North End Community Renewal Corporation University of Winnipeg Community Renewal Corporation
ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS & GROUPS	Disability Advocate Fearless R2W Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association Right to Housing Tenant-Landlord Corporation Winnipeg Rental Network YIMBY Winnipeg
GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS & MANDATED AGENCIES	BC's Aged Out Canadian Mental Health Association City of Winnipeg, Community Services City of Winnipeg, Emergency Social Services Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services Futures Forward Manitoba Youth Centre Metis Child and Family Services Ministry of Families, Employment and Income Assistance Ministry of Families, Manitoba Housing Shawenim Abinoojii Southeast Child & Family Services Winnipeg Regional Health Authority
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS	13 Moons Harm Reduction Initiative Bear Clan Patrol Block by Block Community Safety & Wellbeing Initiative CEDA Pathways FortWhyte Alive Inspire Community Outreach Klinik Knowles Centre Inc. Life's Journey Inc. Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre Macdonald Youth Services

	Mama Bear Clan Patrol Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council Manitoba Harm Reduction Network Manitoba Low Income Intermediary Project Manitoba Schizophrenia Association MARS Community Living New Directions North End Women's Centre North Point Douglas Women's Centre Ogijita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin Reach Youth Services Resource Assistance for Youth Sara Riel Inc. SEED Winnipeg Inc. Siloam Mission's Exit Up Social Planning Council of Winnipeg Spence Neighbourhood Association Teen Stop Jeunesse Urban Matters CCC VOICES: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network West End 24 West Broadway Community Organization West Central Women's Resource Centre Winnipeg Boldness Project
TECHNOLOGY, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES	Aki Energy BUILD Inc. HTFC Planning and Design Purpose Construction Tech Manitoba
UNIVERSITIES	University of Manitoba, Community Health Sciences University of Manitoba, Community Service Learning University of Manitoba, PIKE-Net University of Toronto, Department of Geography University of Winnipeg, Masters of Development Practice
HIGH SCHOOLS	Glenlawn Collegiate Hugh John Macdonald School
FUNDING ORGANIZATIONS	Canadian Institutes of Health Research Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Making the Shift Youth Homelessness Demonstration Lab McConnell Foundation, Innoweave Taking IT Global, Rising Youth United Way of Winnipeg Winnipeg Foundation
OTHER	Millennium for All working group Millennium Public Library Katimavik SHIFT Collaborative

