

2nd Provincial Youth Homelessness Symposium

October 15, 2014

'The Unspoken: Thoughts and Reality'

LGBTQ* Youth Homelessness



*Image created by Aime Shanahan,
Youth and Family Counsellor, Wood's Homes EXIT Youth Shelter*

Wood's Homes presents a one-day symposium for youth-service agencies in Alberta to share knowledge and expertise in addressing youth homelessness.

Presenters: Dr. Alex Abramovich and Dr. April Elliott



WOOD'S HOMES
SERVING CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES
SINCE 1914

* LGBTQ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transsexual and Queer

2nd Provincial Youth Homelessness Symposium

“Almost all LGBTQ people going into shelters have a fear of them, because it isn’t a matter of if it’s dangerous, but just how dangerous. It is horrible to live in that fear every day.”

– Homeless youth, 23-years-old

Wood’s Homes invites professionals in youth-service agencies from across the province to explore the challenges of serving the homeless youth population and opportunities for service improvements. With presenters Dr. Alex Abramovich and Dr. April Elliott, this year’s theme, ‘The Unspoken Thoughts and Reality,’ will focus on LGBTQ youth homelessness. Our objective is to help homeless and disadvantaged youth successfully access housing and health care and lead fulfilling lives.

We believe that collaborating with agencies who do similar work is more effective than working in silos. We look forward to good discussion about the latest research, best practices and expert testimony. Symposium participants will be provided with ACE credits.

Symposium Agenda

Oct.15, 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Wood’s Homes Parkdale Campus - 805 -37 St. NW, Calgary

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| 8 a.m. | Sign-in/coffee/seating |
| 8:30 a.m. | Introduction and Greetings
Dean Soenen, Director of Wood’s Homes Street Services
Madelyn McDonald, Manager of Wood’s Homes Street Services |
| 8:45 a.m. | Video - Perspective from our youth |
| 9 a.m. | Presentation #1 - Health/Mental Health of Vulnerable Youth, Dr. April Elliott |
| 10:30 a.m. | Break |
| 10:45 a.m. | Presentation #2/Workshop -
LGBTQ and Youth Homelessness, Dr. Alex Abramovich |
| 12 p.m. | Lunch |
| 12:45 p.m. | Presentation continued - LGBTQ and Youth Homelessness |
| 2:30 p.m. | Break |
| 2:45 p.m. | Open Mic Panel Discussion -
Current Provincial Landscape of Youth Homelessness
Panelists include provincial representatives |
| 4 p.m. | Closing remarks/feedback |

Oct.16, 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Wood’s Homes Parkdale Campus - 805 -37 St. NW, Calgary

Please join Dr. Alex Abramovich, community partners and government departments from across the province for a second in-depth workshop. This workshop will focus on how to better serve the homeless youth population. There is no cost and lunch will be provided.

Presenters

Dr. Alex Abramovich



Dr. Alex Abramovich is a nationally recognized leader in the area of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, and queer (LGBTQ) youth homelessness – his focus of eight years. He is one of the only Canadian researchers studying the phenomenon of queer and trans youth homelessness.

Dr. Abramovich completed his PhD at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. His research has been highlighted extensively by the media, including The Current, CBC, The Toronto Star, CBC Ottawa, NOW Magazine, and the

Huffington Post. Most importantly, this work is impacting policy. Dr. Abramovich has been working with the City of Toronto to help address the needs of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness. To learn more about his work, please visit: www.ilona6.com.

Presentation - LGBTQ2 and Youth Homelessness

Research shows that in Canada over the past 20 years, LGBTQ youth have been overrepresented in the homeless youth population, but under-represented in the shelter system. Approximately 25-40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ. A high proportion of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness feel safer on the streets than in shelters due to institutional homophobia and transphobia, violence, and discrimination that occurs in the shelter system.

Even though LGBTQ youth homelessness is an emergency situation across Canada, there are currently NO specialized housing initiatives that meet the needs of this population.

The purpose of this presentation/workshop is to help formulate an understanding of the problems faced by LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness, as well as to increase understanding regarding queer and transcultural competency.

Dr. April Elliott, MD, FRCPC, FAAP, FSAHM



Dr. April Elliott is a Pediatrician and Adolescent Medicine Specialist at the Alberta Children's Hospital and a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Calgary. Over the past 13 years, she has been instrumental in developing adolescent health as a sub-specialty of pediatrics in Calgary.

In 2011, she was a recipient of the Alberta Medical Association Medal for Distinguished Service, an honour awarded for her contributions in developing services for adolescents, most notably the Calgary Adolescent Treatment Services clinic which she founded.

Presentation - Health/Mental Health of Vulnerable Youth

Have you ever thought about the obstacles that homeless youth encounter and wonder if there is a way to break down the barriers between a devastating today and a promising tomorrow?

As with everything, our personal viewpoints shape our actions. How we hold our 'prism' or lens dictates how we perceive and deal with policies and barriers.

Calgary Adolescent Treatment Services and EXIT Community Outreach strive to consider various perspectives, evaluate practices and collaborate with government systems to ensure effective services. This presentation will help agencies better understand and facilitate opportunities for youth to find housing and lead healthy lives.

Open Mic - Panelists

Lynn Rhoddy

Program Supervisor, Wood's Homes Stepping Stones Youth Shelter, Fort McMurray

Lynn Rhoddy was part of the advisory committee that helped to establish the Stepping Stones Youth Shelter in 2009. As the Program Supervisor, she is committed to ensuring that the youth of Wood Buffalo have a voice, locally and provincially.

Deb Cautley, Dip. Marketing and PR

Executive Director of Youth Empowerment and Support Services, Edmonton

Deb Cautley has been Executive Director of YESS for the past 13 years. She leads a dynamic team in providing proactive service to youth and ensures that the agency adapts to meet the changing needs of youth in the community.

Wally Czech, MC Psych

Housing First Specialist, City of Lethbridge

Wally Czech provides support to Housing First agencies through case management, best practices, training and monitoring. He has helped streamline the approach and ensure fidelity to the model.

Tim Veitch, MSW, RSW

Quality Assurance Specialist, Calgary Homeless Foundation

Tim Veitch has worked with the Calgary Homeless Foundation since 2011. His work involves supporting the Plan to End Youth Homelessness in Calgary.

Dr. Yale D. Belanger, PhD

University of Lethbridge

Dr. Belanger is an Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science, Adjunct Associate Professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences and Associate Member of the Department of Native American Studies. He is a strong advocate of improving Aboriginal housing conditions and ending homelessness.

Lee Allard, BSW, RSW

*LGBTQ Youth Support Worker, Adult and Professional Educator and Community Organizer,
Calgary Sexual Health Centre/Alex Youth Health Centre*

Lee Allard works with the Calgary Sexual Health Centre and the Alex Youth Health Centre as part of a United Way-funded Learning Initiative called 'Enhancing Supports.' For over two years, her focus has been to bring an LGBTQ lens to working with vulnerable youth and to help youth connect to natural supports.

Moderator

Madelyn McDonald, MSW, RSW

Manager of Street Services, Wood's Homes

Madelyn McDonald has been working with homeless youth for more than 30 years. She was imperative in helping establish the EXIT Youth Shelter and is a devoted spokesperson for homeless youth in Calgary.

Recommended Hotels



Best Western Village Park Inn

1804 Crowchild Trail N.W. Calgary

Phone: 403-289-0241

<http://bestwesternalberta.com/hotels/best-western-village-park-inn/>

Special rate: \$149 + GST per night (hot breakfast included)

Wood's Homes has reserved a block of 15 double queen suites. To book a room, call (403) 289-0241 and reference the 'Provincial Youth Homelessness Symposium.'

Reservations must be booked by **Sept.29, 2014** in order to receive this special rate.



Sandman Calgary West

125 Bowridge Drive Northwest, Calgary

Phone: (403) 288-6033

<http://www.sandmanhotels.ca/hotels/calgary-west/>

Special rate: \$129 + GST per night

Wood's Homes has reserved a block of 15 standard single king suites (double queen suites are also available). To book a room, call 1-800-SANDMAN and reference the group confirmation number: **161330**.

Reservations must be booked before **Sept.19, 2014** in order to receive this special rate.

About Wood's Homes

Wood's Homes was founded as an orphanage in 1914 by Reverend George Wood. Today, we are a nationally recognized and accredited mental health organization that offers 35+ programs and services in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. Each year, more than 20,000 vulnerable children, adolescents and families from across Canada come to us for help.

We operate three shelters for homeless youth (Calgary, Lethbridge and Fort McMurray) and provide a continuum of services to youth at risk of homelessness.

These services include EXIT Community Outreach (a downtown warming centre); New Horizon (transitional housing in partnership with Horizon Housing); and Roofs for Youth (transitional housing in partnership with Calgary John Howard Society and Calgary Young Offenders Centre). Our Youth Culinary Arts Program, in partnership with Calgary John Howard Society, provides career training for homeless and at-risk youth who are interested in employment in the restaurant/food industry.

Wood's Homes is proud to celebrate 100 years of working with children, adolescents and families.

www.woodshomes.ca |    

We Never Say No. We Never Give Up. We Never Turn Anyone Away.