OUR YOUTH, OUR



IMPACT Report 2018

5

OUR MISSION

... is to serve the suffering children and youth on the street and to protect and safeguard all children and youth... with absolute respect and unconditional love.

OUR VISION

To lead change that challenges at-risk, homeless and trafficked youth to pursue a life of opportunity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Executive Director		
and Board Chair		2
Social Issues and our Youth		4
Addressing Unique Circumstances		5
Strategic Plan Update		6
Jim's Story		8
CIBC: Funding Independence and Fulfillment		9
Meeting our Youth's Complex Needs		10
Financial Information		12
Dr. Vivienne Poy: A Family Legacy of Giving		14
Avery's Story		15
Governance		16
Board List	Inside Back C	over

OUR PRINCIPLES

IMMEDIACY

Youth come to us in crisis and we provide for their basic human needs – food, clothing, a shower and medical attention – immediately.

SANCTUARY

We provide safety to protect our youth from violence and degradation.

COMMUNICATING VALUES

We show our youth that caring relationships are based on trust, respect and honesty.

STRUCTURE

We provide structure and reasonable expectations so our youth can focus on their futures.

CHOICE

We help our youth make positive choices and encourage them to believe in themselves.





For the last 36 years, with your help, we have maintained steadfast dedication to our mission:

Supporting the vulnerable youth who come through our doors with absolute respect and unconditional love. To this day, we remain committed to this duty. We know that the youth we serve each and every day are the future of our country, and when given the right services and opportunities, they have the chance to build a better future.



A PROMISING NEW



Bruce Rivers, Executive Director (left), and Kevin Patterson, Board Chair (centre-left), spend time with our youth on our rooftop garden.

BUILDING ON OUR MOMENTUM

The work we have done over the last five years has moved us in a promising new direction; we are continuing to build on this momentum as we come out of the first year of our 2018-2022 strategic plan.

With your support, we are paving the way for reduced dependence on our crisis shelter by creating more housing options in the community, implementing an individualized approach to health and well-being, expanding our educational and employment opportunities and increasing our homelessness and sex trafficking prevention initiatives. More details can be found on page 6.

RESPONDING TO A GROWING NEED

Over the last 10 years, we have seen a concerning trend emerge—a record high daily number of youth are staying in our shelter for longer periods of time. Youth are staying with us 26 per cent longer, making it difficult for others to access our shelter beds. In fact, 743 youth stayed in our crisis shelter last year, which is 20 per cent less than the previous year.

A contributing factor is Toronto's expensive rental market and the unfortunate reality that our youth lack stable, affordable housing and sustainable employment opportunities.

CREATING MORE DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

Housing is key to long-term stability and success. We know that by providing our young people with a wider range of housing options, in addition to the mentorship and guidance offered by our caring staff, they can achieve better long-term outcomes.

With the support of private donors, corporate partners, the City of Toronto and its Community Housing Corporation, we were able to expand our transitional housing and after-care support, which provided independent living experiences for 15 per cent more of our youth this year.

We are also continuing to expand our housing for victims of sex trafficking as part of our comprehensive anti-trafficking plan. We will be opening a new supported housing program this fall, which will provide immediate support to victims leaving difficult situations.

SUPPORTING THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUTH

As the needs of our youth become more varied and complex, we are evolving to better serve them. The youth we support are dealing with significant trauma and may not have the coping skills in place to deal with this trauma. As a result, it can be difficult for them to think through a plan for going back to school, getting a job or finding an apartment as a first priority. We believe delivering programming that is responsive to the individual needs of our youth will help them experience control over their situations and see they have the potential to live happier and more productive lives. As a result, we have begun enhancing and improving access to services for our young people struggling with mental health and substance use so they can get the help they need in a timely manner. Visit page 10 for more details on our approach to working with youth.

HELPING YOUTH ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE OVER THE LONG-TERM

To help our youth achieve independence, we continue to provide high-quality education and job training programs internally and through partnerships in the community. This past year, 25 per cent more youth secured jobs and job training placements. Building on the success of our culinary arts training program, Cooking for Life, we will be exploring other opportunities for our youth in the coming year.





RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE PATHS TO HOMELESSNESS AND SEX TRAFFICKING

Preventing young people from experiencing homelessness or being trafficked, and reducing their risk of re-entry are key priorities for our agency. We are increasing our efforts to raise awareness of the issues and causes that may lead a young person to become homeless or trafficked by expanding our in-school prevention programming and training to sectors and industries that are in contact with victims of trafficking or sexual exploitation.

We are also working with community partners across the city to develop strategies that will engage and strengthen family relationships before a youth becomes homeless in an effort to help end the cycle of homelessness.

PLANNING FOR LONGEVITY

Last year, our Board of Directors focused on our ability to meet the diverse needs of youth while ensuring our agency is operating at a level of excellence, and we have the ability to sustain this new direction. This included succession planning for key agency staff and Board member vacancies, with a focus on diversity, building a four-year fundraising investment strategy as well as forming a real estate advisory committee to review our long-term real estate needs and strategic options for the future.

The Board also reviewed our investment strategy to ensure it aligns with our long-term objectives and cash flow requirements and is working to implement a new investment strategy in the coming year.

With this plan and the compassion of donors and partners like you, we are primed to build on the success we've achieved. We are most grateful for your continued support.

Anure Lueno

Bruce Rivers Executive Director

Kevin Patterson Board Chair

BROAD SOCIAL ISSUES AND OUR

A youth's pathway to our doors is complex and a result of an interplay between numerous factors—many of which are beyond their control.

EMPLOYMENT

13%

of **Canadian youth** are unemployed.² of **homeless youth** are unemployed.²

75%

HOUSING

1 IN 3 YOUNG ADULTS

aged 20 to 34 live with a parent, a trend that has been increasing since 2001.³

Of the **homeless youth** that find housing...

25%

WILL LOSE THEIR HOUSING WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR.

Homelessness is first experienced before the age of 16 by 40% of youth.²

 Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada. Mental Health Commission of Canada. 2013.
Gaetz, Stephen, O'Grady, Bill, Kidd, Sean and Schwan, Kaitlin. Without A Home: The National Youth Homelessness Survey. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Toronto, 2016.
Young adults living with their parents in Canada in 2016. Statistics Canada. 2016.
Exiting Street Life Project. Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. 2014.

Among youth who are homeless in Canada...

HEALTH & WELL-BEING

10-20%

experienced A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS.²

EDUCATION



The national high school drop-out rate.²



of Canadian youth

are affected by a mental illness or disorder.¹

The drop-out rate for homeless youth.²

ADDRESSING UNIQUE

Mental illness among our youth is a prevalent issue and a significant hurdle to overcome. Research has shown, "young people that experience adversity prior to becoming homeless are more likely to experience poorer mental health, suicide attempts, a lower quality of life, and negative psychological resilience".⁵

With poor mental health, achievements in education are harder to attain. This challenge is further exacerbated for youth who lack stable housing and an income to afford food, clothing, school supplies and transportation.

And yet, for these youth, fulfilling the educational demands for today's tight job market simultaneously intersects with their need to work and sustain themselves.

Homeless youth explained that they only qualify for low-wage jobs that are precarious and which rarely offer opportunities for growth.⁵ Furthermore, when housing has become so unaffordable in Canada that an increasing number of young adults need to live with their parents, vulnerable youth face significant barriers in their ability to successfully achieve independence. In order for our youth to have a fair chance, they must have access to programs and services that not only meet their needs but also have the flexibility to accommodate the uniqueness of their circumstances.

nslance

Building on the progress achieved from our 2013-2017 Strategic Plan and with input from a multitude of stakeholders and partners, Covenant House has developed a new five-year plan that addresses these complex needs.

OUR 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOCUS ON:



Health and Well-being



Education and Employment Well-being



Prevention and Early Intervention

5. Kidd, Sean, Gaetz, Stephen and O'Grady, Bill. *The 2015 National Canadian Homeless Youth Survey: Mental Health and Addiction Findings*. 2017. In Schwan, Kaitlin, Gaetz, Stephen, French, David, Redman, Melanie, Thistle, Jesse and Dej, Erin. *What Would it Take? Youth Across Canada Speak Out on Youth Homelessness Prevention*. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press. Toronto, 2018.

2018-2022 FISCAL 2017-2018 RESULTS



HOUSING AND AFTER-CARE

GOAL: Expand housing and after-care services to meet the complex and diverse needs of our youth.

2017-2018 RESULTS

- Completed a review of our approach to working with youth
- Housed more than 800 young people
- Developed a model for a new Supported Housing program for victims of sex trafficking
- Enhanced our staff complement to better support youth in the community – provided one-on-one support to 273 youth
- Extended our drop-in centre hours to include weekends and helped 1,890 kids
- Increased our housing stock in the community through new partnerships with CAPREIT and Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Secured rent supplements for our youth from the City of Toronto



HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

GOAL: Improve the health and well-being of our youth.

2017-2018 RESULTS

- Had 4,843 visits to our on-site health care clinic and treated 699 youth
- Implemented a more individualized approach to supporting youth with substance use and mental health issues, supporting 140 youth
- Offered 374 life skills workshops where youth attained skills like budgeting and meal planning to support their transition to independent living
- Supported 90 victims of sex trafficking and connected them with the services that they need
- Matched 42 youth with mentors

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY AND EXCELLENCE

GOAL: Increase our organization's reputation and capacity to ensure we can grow and deliver programs and services to our youth.

2017-2018 RESULTS

- Developed a new staff training plan to increase skill levels in the areas of trauma-informed care, management and supervisory skills, marketing and fund development
- Attained the pro-bono services of TAXI, a creative agency, to help us better articulate our work in support of at-risk, homeless and trafficked youth
- Developed a fundraising investment strategy to ensure the financial sustainability of our strategic priorities
- Used the learnings from our youth evaluations of our crisis shelter to inform a review of our program and to develop a longer-term strategy that will better support the complexities faced by our youth
- Developed a succession plan for key staff and board positions to ensure operational stability and growth
- Established a real estate committee of experts to develop a long-term real estate strategy that aligns with the needs of our youth

CORE VALUES

OF STRATEGIC PLAN:



COLLABORATION

LEADERSHIP

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

GOAL: Expand educational and employment opportunities for our youth.

2017-2018 RESULTS

- 66 youth participated in our adult education program and attended our on-site high school earning 49 credits
- Expanded access to our employment centre for youth in the community
- Broadened our employment opportunities through placements in our agency and with corporate partners – 477 jobs and job training placements realized
- Exploring a new barber/esthetician job training program
- Secured three-year funding from the federal government for our culinary arts training program, Cooking for Life





GOAL: Expand our initiatives in homelessness and sex trafficking prevention and early intervention to better protect our youth.

2017-2018 RESULTS

- Consulted with youth and community agencies to develop a strategy to reconnect youth with their families and/or personal support network, reuniting/reconnecting 123 youth
- Delivered homelessness prevention presentations to more than 28,000 students
- Trained and provided presentations related to sex trafficking prevention to nearly 6,500 students, front line workers, law enforcement and professionals from the legal sector and hospitality industry
- Completed a national Ipsos study on the attitudes and behaviours of 12-16 year olds that may put them at risk of sex trafficking and exploitation



"I wouldn't have considered pursuing a career in nursing if I hadn't gone through some of the challenges I've experienced in my life,"

Jim Leung reflects. "In following this career path, I hope to give back to Covenant House by one day working in their health care clinic and supporting youth like me."

Jim came to Covenant House about five years ago after becoming estranged from his parents. He spent time both in our crisis shelter and CIBC Rights of Passage (ROP) program, where he developed a close relationship with his youth worker, Genieve Tan.

"During his time at ROP, Jim was a very hard working, academically driven young man," Genieve says. His hard work and the support he received at Covenant House paid off. Jim graduated high school with honours and then gained acceptance in the Life Sciences program at the University of Toronto.

He completed his Bachelor of Science with Honours while living independently, and with a renewed sense of self and direction, his sights are now set on a career in nursing. These photos, taken by Jim, are a continuation of his story.

Note: To protect this youth's identity, we have changed his name at his request.



photographer to cover my expenses while attending school.





My first foray into nursing started with a clinical placement at Bridgepoint Hospital. This was an important step toward my lifelong goal of becoming a nurse practitioner.

This is a room similar to the one I stayed in at ROP. These spaces and the team at ROP played a big part in getting me to where I am today.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDEPENDENCE AND

CIBC Rights of Passage

Runa Whitaker, Senior Director of Community Investment (centre-left), and Diane Elliot, Senior Manager of Corporate Giving and CIBC Children's Foundation (centre-right), enjoy a board game with youth in our CIBC Rights of Passage family room.

A quick stroll through the halls of Covenant House tells you everything you need to know about the generosity of one of our most devoted corporate donors.

Their financial support has helped fund everything from new buildings and capital improvements to numerous prevention and early intervention efforts. There's never been a time when there wasn't CIBC representation on the Covenant House Board of Directors. Since 2005, they've funded the Rights of Passage program, which supports youth as they build the life skills they need to live independently. Each youth works with their worker to set goals for the future and accesses services that help them put their plans into motion.

The program aligns perfectly with CIBC's overall youth-at-risk strategy. "CIBC Rights of Passage helps youth get the support they need so they can realize independence and success, whatever that means to them," said Runa Whitaker, Senior Director of Community Investment at CIBC.

"Our hope for the participants is that they are able to live a fulfilling, independent life."

Thanks to CIBC's generous contributions, many program graduates are doing exactly that.



Over the last year, much of our research and evaluation work focused on enhancing our understanding of the diverse needs of the youth we serve and how we can better meet these needs. These findings were critical to the review of our programming and helped inform the adjustments we made to the way we are delivering services to youth.

Our experience has shown us that youth need more help to overcome the increasingly complex challenges they are facing, which has resulted in higher numbers of them staying with us for longer periods of time. Our data indicates youth are staying with us 26 per cent longer than they did the year prior.

Throughout the program review process, our goal has remained the same: to help youth gain momentum in their lives by making their time at Covenant House their last experience with homelessness.

To create solutions that help meet the varied and complex needs of our youth, we first identified some of the challenges youth are experiencing that have been barriers to them moving forward with their lives.

When youth are dealing with significant amounts of trauma, it can be difficult for them to think through a plan for going back to school, getting a job or finding an apartment as a first priority.

To better address this, we have adjusted our relationship-focused approach so that it places the needs of each individual youth at the centre of their care. Each young person is actively involved in identifying their personal goals and developing customized plans based on their individual situations. As part of this approach, we have moved away from our abstinencebased model in order to better support our youth struggling with substance use so that they get the help they need in a timely, more supportive manner.

Building a strong, authentic relationship is the most important factor in working with each youth we serve. This is the conduit for change and growth in their lives and a place where healing from their past can begin.

We believe delivering programming that is responsive to the individual needs of youth will help them experience control over their situations and see that they have the potential to live happy and productive lives.

OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS IN PROGRESS



National research to determine the barriers sex trafficking victims experience that prevent them from getting the help they need



An evaluation of The Rogers Home, our specialized transitional housing program for victims of sex trafficking



An assessment of the needs of sex trafficking victims in Toronto



The release of the findings of our national study on the **behaviours** and attitudes of teen girls related to the risks associated with luring and sex trafficking

THE YOUTH WE ARE SEEING AT COVENANT HOUSE HAVE EXPERIENCED HIGH LEVELS OF TRAUMA:



LEFT HOME BEFORE THE AGE OF 18



LEFT HOME BECAUSE OF ABUSE



REPORTED A LEARNING DISABILITY THAT MADE SCHOOL MORE CHALLENGING



EXPERIENCED BULLYING, WHICH MADE SCHOOL MORE DIFFICULT



IDENTIFIED AS LGBTQ+

As a result of this trauma, youth are struggling to cope:



HAVE USED AT LEAST ONE SUBSTANCE IN THE PAST WEEK



OF YOUTH EXPRESSED THEIR DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE WAS OUT OF CONTROL IN THE PAST YEAR (HARMING RELATIONSHIPS OR DAILY FUNCTIONING SUCH AS GOING TO WORK OR SCHOOL)



REPORTED EXPERIENCING HIGH LEVELS OF ANXIETY WITHIN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS



REPORTED THINKING ABOUT ENDING THEIR LIFE WITHIN THE PREVIOUS THREE MONTHS **DELIVERING FINANCIAL**

PVENTS/ THIRD PARTY 13% INDIVIDUALS 76% Sources of Donations \$244,200

Our donors provided 82 per cent of our total revenue last year, and your support has enabled us to offer life-changing programs to thousands of young people.

We ended the year in a much stronger financial position than planned with a \$2.4-million surplus on a consolidated basis. This was mostly the result of increasing our fundraising revenue by 6 per cent and decreasing our operating expenses by over 2 per cent versus our budget.

We are seeing strong evidence of the investments we have been making in the fundraising area over the past five years. These investments include growing our overall donor base with emphasis in high-performing and lowercost fundraising programs. With this in mind, we have increased our monthly donor program and our leadership-level gifts while improving the profitability of our events to a 90 per cent return.

As a result, we exceeded our fundraising revenues versus budget by almost \$1.3 million and increased our overall contribution to the programs supporting our youth by over \$2 million or almost 14 per cent over the previous year.

We continue to re-invest our surplus to fund our strategic plan initiatives, capital projects to upgrade our facilities, housing options for youth, technology and systems improvements and to ensure we have a maximum coverage of up to six months of annual operating expenses in reserves to be used for emergency situations.

We are most grateful to Catholic Charities and ShareLife for their continued support of our transitional housing, Youth in Transition and mentorship programs.



SL ShareLife



The Standards Program Trustmark is a mark of Imagine Canada used under licence by Covenant House Toronto.



FOR FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

VISIT: CovenantHouseToronto.ca

A FAMILY LEGACY OF

When she was a girl, Dr. Vivienne Poy knew two things for sure: education is the key to success—and it's the duty of the privileged to help others achieve their dreams.

She learned these values from her father, who embodied a family legacy of generosity by quietly investing time and resources to give young people opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have experienced.



Poy grew up to become the first Canadian senator of Asian ancestry, president of her own fashion design company, chancellor of the University of Toronto and founder of the Lee Tak Wai Foundation. She's also a proud wife, mother and grandmother.





"The Quilt" is a collaborative project created by the youth from our on-site high school. Each patch reflects something important to them.

Throughout it all, Poy gave back. She began supporting Covenant House in 1987 when she saw how troubled youth were empowered with services and education. In 2009, she became a monthly donor. Recently, through her foundation, she pledged to support Covenant House's work to prevent sex trafficking.

"Education is the only leveler in society, the only way to lift yourself up. I want to do everything I can to help future generations succeed."



In 2015, I broke free after being trafficked for over a year. When I connected with my advocate with the Anti-Trafficking Team at Covenant House, it was the first time I felt someone understood what I had been through and what I was still dealing with.

The Rogers Home provided a change in surroundings that made it easier to focus on rebuilding my confidence and independence. Covenant House encouraged the healthy connections I already had in my life, so I was able to stay close with my family, maintain my part-time job and continue volunteering in my community while learning to find a better balance that gave me time to heal.

While living at the Rogers Home, I returned to university to complete my degree in International Studies and Law and Social Thought. It was a goal I finally felt capable of achieving after years of spiralling.

I now live in a community apartment offered by Covenant House and am one step closer to being fully independent. I feel more safe, capable and confident than I have in years as I balance school, work, volunteering and a healthy social life.

"I am full of gratitude for my time spent with Covenant House. Thanks to my time here, I am ready to take on everything my future has to offer."

Note: To protect this youth's identity, we have changed her name at her request and used a stock photo.



ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

At Covenant House Toronto, we measure our effectiveness by our ability to successfully deliver and expand services for at-risk, homeless and trafficked youth. We manage this through a continuousimprovement framework focused on our operations, fundraising ability and efficiency, governance practices and stewardship.

FISCAL STEWARDSHIP AND TRANSPARENCY

Covenant House is unique among social service organizations in that more than 80 per cent of our annual operating budget comes from donations, whereas many other not-for-profits receive most of their revenues from government funding or other organizations. Our fundraising is in line with government and industry standards.



DECISION-MAKING

The Board of Directors is responsible for the stewardship of the agency and the oversight of our management and business affairs.

Our governance structure includes policies, guidelines and practices that provide a framework for decision-making and operations across the agency. This includes Board recruitment, succession planning, staff compensation and evaluation, Board and Committee mandates, risk management, strategic and annual planning and financial management and controls. While we are working to access more government funding, we also want to ensure our services are viable over the long-term and responsive to our youth's changing needs.

As a primarily self-funded agency, we recognize that we must have a diverse portfolio of fundraising programs and revenue sources to ensure financial viability and reduce risk. We have been working toward the development of lower-cost fundraising sources for the past several years and have had continued success in growing monthly giving, leadership gifts and major peer-to-peer events. This year, we also completed a review of our philanthropic giving area and developed a strategy to leverage our potential in this area.

RESERVES

Our policy is to maintain a maximum reserve fund of up to six months of our current operating budget to be used for emergency situations, capital upgrades and/or for the agency's future development.

INVESTMENTS

Our responsibility is to address the manner in which our investment portfolio is managed. The responsibility for the agency's long-, mediumand short-term investments lies with the Board.

RISK MANAGEMENT

We are committed to an ongoing program of risk management to protect the organization and its assets (people, property, income and reputation). Management is responsible for the delivery of a Board-approved risk management policy which deals with program delivery, governance, operations, finance and regulatory compliance.





AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT AS OF JUNE 30, 2018.

CHAIR Kevin Patterson Group Head, Technology and Operations CIBC

VICE CHAIR Rahul Suri

Founder & CEO Clariti Strategic Advisors

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Ken Morell Senior Global Advisor Dentons LLP

PAST CHAIR Duncan Hannay President and CEO Street Capital Bank of Canada

DIRECTORS David Armstrong Director Onex Partners

Clinton Braganza *SVP Marketing, Canadian Banking* Scotiabank Pamela Bryant Senior Fellow, Munk School of Global Affairs & Public Policy University of Toronto

Kevin Coon *Managing Partner* Baker & McKenzie LLP

Paula Courtney *President* Verde Group

Lynn Factor *Child Victim Program* Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre

Diane Karnay *Counsel* Wilson Vukelich LLP

Amanda Lang *Anchor* Bloomberg North

Dan McGrath *Chief Operating Officer* Cineplex Entertainment

Susan Paterson Director of Client Service Resources Global Professionals (RGP) Sister Mary Rowell Sisters of St. Joseph

Chief Mark Saunders Toronto Police Services

Bruce Shewfelt *President* Acuity Sales Inc.

The Honourable Karen Weiler *Retired Judge of the Court of Appeal for Ontario*

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

Bruce Rivers *Executive Director*

Shirley Broderick Director, Finance & Purchasing

Josie do Rego Director, Development & Communications

Carol Howes Director, Program Services

Cindy Metzler Associate Executive Director

COVENANT HOUSE INTERNATIONAL

Covenant House Toronto is part of a 31-location network, spanning from Alaska to Latin America that has served more than one million at-risk, homeless and trafficked youth since opening our doors over 40 years ago. Covenant House is the largest privately funded child care agency in the Americas.

Covenant House Toronto 20 Gerrard Street East Toronto, ON M5B 2P3



CONNECT WITH US

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Thanks to our youth, designers, photographer and printer for their contributions to the production of this Impact Report. Charitable Registration Number 10699 0195 RR0001