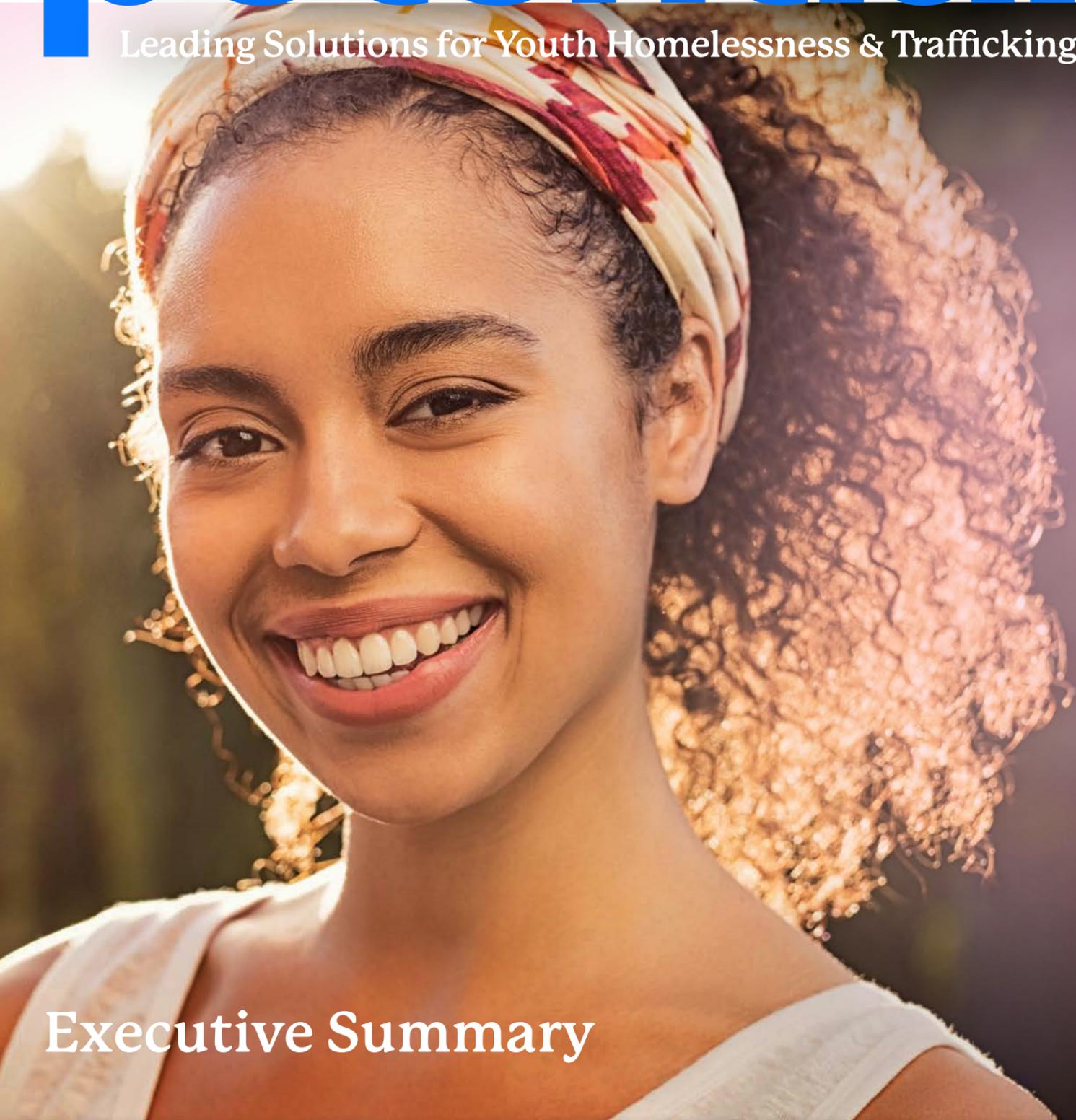


# IGNITING potential

Leading Solutions for Youth Homelessness & Trafficking



## Executive Summary

### About Covenant House Toronto

Covenant House helps youth ignite their potential and reclaim their lives. As Canada's largest agency serving youth who are homeless, trafficked or at risk, we offer the widest range of services to hundreds of young people every day. More than a place to stay, we provide 24/7 crisis shelter and transitional housing on-site and in the community, along with comprehensive services including education, counselling, health care, employment assistance, job training and after-care. Since 1982, Covenant House has supported more than 100,000 young people.

### Mission

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

### Vision

**To lead change that supports and empowers youth who are homeless, trafficked or at risk to pursue a life of wellness and opportunity.**



### Our Principles



#### Immediacy

We welcome all youth without judgement or conditions; meeting their immediate basic needs of food, clothing, medical attention and a safe place to sleep.

#### Sanctuary

We acknowledge the bravery it takes for young people to walk through our doors. We offer them a welcoming and safe environment based on absolute respect, unconditional love and relentless support, where we believe in and encourage their resilience.

#### Value Communication

We value authentic relationships, honour the voice of our youth, and model caring relationships based on trust, respect, and honesty.

#### Structure

We provide stability and consistency for young people to pursue their great promise.

#### Choice

We honour that young people hold the power to their story. Through relentless engagement we foster confidence and encourage them to believe in themselves and make informed choices about their lives.

### CONNECT WITH US

info@covenanthouse.ca

CovenantHouseToronto.ca

@CovenantHouseToronto

@CovenantHouseTO



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

Charitable Registration #10699 0195 RR0001

# 2023-2027 Strategic Priorities

Covenant House Toronto is committed to playing a greater role in reducing the number of youth experiencing homelessness and trafficking. A significant focus of this plan is providing innovative emergency services in new and progressive facilities that will help more young people move from shelter into the community faster. We will work with our partners to deliver new programs to stem the flow of young people into homelessness, find alternatives for youth who have better options than coming into the shelter and support youth who have transitioned to living in the community.



## Shelter & Emergency Services

**Reimagine the shelter and emergency services to produce the best outcomes for youth**

Our shelter and emergency services help youth regain control over their lives by moving them out of survival mode and directing their focus to the future. We will redevelop our main site, with greater capacity and updated spaces for the shelter and program areas. We will continue to expand, enhance and deliver evidence-based programs and services, using the best, most current and promising practices that meet the increasingly complex needs of youth.

### Key Initiatives

- Create innovative and flexible spaces that are welcoming, safe, inclusive, accessible and technologically enabled
- Create spaces to better support youth with trauma, mental health and addiction challenges
- Create residential programs and spaces that offer more privacy, safety, opportunity for relationship and community building and learning
- Create a new youth wellness hub with a greater range of services and practitioners and emphasis on culturally appropriate services
- Cluster related programs and services together such as employment, training and education and mental health, harm reduction and medical services and create additional spaces for future programming or training initiatives



## Transition, Community Housing & Supports

**Ensure young people remain stably housed and thrive with housing and supports**

Stable housing is critical to all health outcomes and a vital component of solving homelessness and supporting young people in leaving trafficking. We will engage in partnerships and advocacy to increase options and access to housing and supports for young people. We will expand and deliver best practices and evidence-based programs and services to help young people better transition from shelter to the community.

### Key Initiatives

- Expand our Youth In Transition program supporting young people living in the community
- Add other specialized supports and continue pursuing partnerships to find innovative solutions to expand housing options and services
- Continue to advocate to government and other community sector leaders for greater availability of, and access to, appropriate and affordable housing options



## Prevention

**Work upstream to prevent more youth from experiencing homelessness and sex trafficking**

Prevention is key to stopping youth homelessness and trafficking before they begin. We will pilot and implement upstream prevention and intervention programs and expand our community awareness and education initiatives to address the needs of young people before there is a crisis, preventing them from ever experiencing homelessness or trafficking.

### Key Initiatives

- Work upstream with Toronto schools and child welfare agencies to reduce factors that may lead to youth homelessness
- Work with young people to find safe housing options and wrap-around supports as an alternative to staying in shelter
- Offer individual and family therapy and referrals to community resources to help build supportive relationships
- Expand our school and community awareness and education initiatives



## People & Workplace

**Create an innovative and mission-focused workplace and become an employer of choice**

Our staff and volunteers are passionate about our work and committed to helping the young people who come to us achieve their goals. We want to build on this strong foundation to ensure that Covenant House is a place where our people feel valued and supported to make meaningful contributions.

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

**Build an equitable, diverse and inclusive organization that fosters a sense of belonging for all staff and youth**

Nurturing equity, diversity and inclusion for youth, staff, senior leadership, volunteers and the Board is a top priority for our agency. We will implement an EDI strategy that starts with better understanding the current state of the agency and advancing practices that acknowledge and address areas for improvement.