

# 7 Cities Housing First Workshop

Youth At Risk

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# Personal Background

- Adjunct Professor/Education Coordinator, Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services
- Former Board Member of Edmonton Homeward Trust
- Queer community activist



# Homeless Youth

- Current Provincial interest and work on policy/programs for homeless youth
- Edmonton Homeward Trust funding of homeless youth programs
- Agencies/Organizations coming forward with Programs for homeless youth
- Why is there so much attention to youth-numbers are small?

# Adolescent Homelessness: Focus and Goals

- Goals:

  - Transition to Adulthood

  - Prevention/Early Intervention

- Perspectives:

  - Adolescent Development

  - Different kind of intervention

# Adolescence: Definition(s)

- Transitional stage of physical and psychological human development generally occurring during the period from puberty to legal adulthood
- Preparation of children for adult roles
- An adolescent's thoughts start taking more of an abstract form and egocentric thoughts decrease

# Adolescence

- Key characteristics

Cognitive

Psychological

Physical

Social/Sexual/Relationships

# Queer Homeless Youth Edmonton

- The National Network for Youth (USA) estimates 20-40% of homeless youth are Queer.
- Projections based on the Homeless Count for Edmonton would be:

Age 14-17      20-40% of 56 (11-25 youth)

Age 18-24      20-40% of 202 (40-81 youth)

Total Queer—51-106 youth



# Queer Homeless Youth

- According to USA information for queer homeless youth:

LGBT youth become homeless at the average age of  
14.4

Trans youth become homeless at the average age of 13.5

# Queer Homeless Youth

- Particular challenges faced by g/l/b homeless youth?
- Particular challenges faced by two-spirit homeless youth?
- Particular challenges faced by trans homeless youth?

# Queer Homeless Youth

## Social Change/Canadian Expectations

- Media(TV,Film,Music,Internet/ YouTube,etc.)
- Openness of GLBTQ community and Canadian Society
- Recreation and Sports
- Social/Institutional activities(dance, clubs, etc.)
- School policy and practices
- Shifts in Canadian attitudes
- Majority of Canadians agree that homophobia is wrong and should be challenged
- Being LGBTQ is the character of a person, it is who you are

# Informed Practices

## 1. Agency philosophy

queer affirming and safe space (LGBQ and Trans)

‘positive youth development’ (LGBQ and Trans)

## 2. Agency policies

non-discrimination

employment practices

# Informed Practices (cont.)

- Outreach
- Intake / Assessment
- Program and Services
- Youth Voice and Leadership
- Culturally Diversity and Standards of Care Training for Staff

# Bullying

- Particular concern around homophobic/transphobic bullying.

# TERMS

Queer

Gay

Transgender

Heterosexism

Coming Out

Gender Identity

Two-Spirit

Fag / Faggot

Homosexual

Bisexual





# Case Studies



# Louis

- Louis, 16, walked in your door/was referred yesterday. Louis left his home near Swan Hills about 6 months ago and came to Edmonton and stayed with different ‘friends’ every few days. For 2 months he was with Fred, 38 until Fred told him he had to leave. He started staying at shelters but did not get along with all the older men.
- “Yea, Fred was ok. I could stay there with him anytime and he took care of me—you know, eating, shower, in bed together. Then he told me to leave, don’t know why—I did everything he wanted me to do. I can’t go back to Swan Hills, I don’t fit in and don’t tell me to go to school! Other kids go after me—’fag, sissy’ that kind of stuff—I hate school!”

# Louis

1. How would you make sure Louis felt safe and was not hassled and teased?
2. Develop a 6 month plan for Louis that supports his need to eventually become an independent adult.
3. How can/what will you or your organization do to keep Louis interested and engaged 24 hours a day week after week?

# Cris

Cris is a 17 year old trans homeless youth with extremely short hair, jeans, work boots and an oversized flannel shirt hanging out partially covering breasts. He never knew his mother or who his father is. Cris grew up with his grandmother who is 'old fashioned' and an active church goer in Edmonton.

“When I was 16 or so I told her to use ‘he’ or ‘him’ about me. I am a boy. Grandma shouted ‘what do you mean you are a boy, you are a girl’. I told her I was a boy and get over it and she told me to leave. So I did. I hung out with a couple of guys for quite a while until they figured out I didn’t have a penis and then they dished me. So since then I have been living kind of rough.”

Cris disclosed that he likes being with the men but likes sex with women—”you know, a strap on or fingers” but insists as a man he wants to be with men and treated as a man-”don’t put me living with women”.

# Cris

- 1. What other information about Cris would be helpful for you to know?
- 2. You know that most places for youth divide their beds/bathrooms/locker by 'male and female'. How would you handle the sleeping arrangements/washroom and showering?
- 3. Cris does not have friends and is quite alienated from others—adults and young people. How would you go about helping Cris to re-engage in society?
- 4. Cris tells you his 'dream', what he hopes for is to get rid of his breasts, grow a beard and get a penis. What would you advise?

# Waylon Auger

Waylon Auger was picked up last night by the police in the Gazebo Park off of Whyte Avenue at 4am for being in the park and sleeping in the park after hours. He may have been drinking or using drugs.

Here's what you know from your interview/conversation with him.

- Waylon is 18, originally from the Woodland First Nation. He came to Edmonton by himself when he was 16.
- He likes the name 'Waylon' as it is neither a girl's or boy's name—just a name. He says he may be two-spirit, or bisexual, or trans or none of these—does not seem comfortable with any of these terms.
- Waylon and his father fought a lot. Waylon's mother says his dad spent 6 years at a boys residential school run by the Christian Brothers that had a history of a lot of abuse. He won't talk about it, not even to his mother.
- Although Waylon says he left home, it appears his father threw him out—"really, he hates me. He didn't like the way I was acting, clothes I wore, music, the guys I was hanging with and no girlfriends."

# Waylon Auger

1. How might sex and sexuality fit into Waylon's story/situation?
2. What might be the impact of the residential school on Waylon's father and how might it connect to the relationship between Waylon and his father?
3. In deciding how to work with Waylon, what other information would you want to know?

# PFLAG Canada



<http://www.pflagcanada.ca>

Number of resources for families and individuals

Extensive reading list



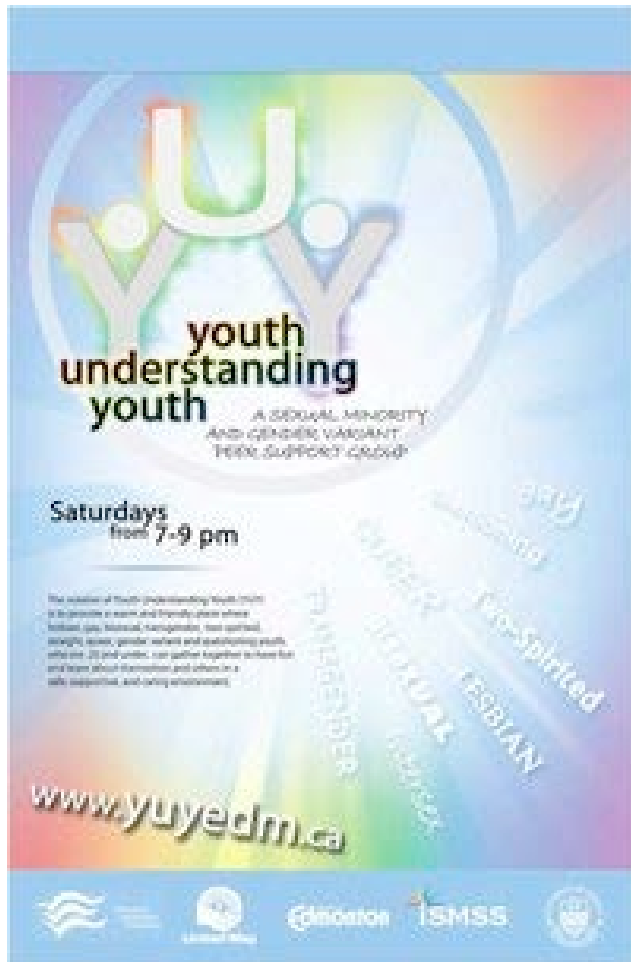


# Pride Centre of Edmonton

- 9540 - 111 Avenue (780) 482-3234
- Free short-term solution-focused counseling  
Wednesday evenings from 6-9pm (provided by  
professionally trained counselors).
- For more information or to book an appointment call  
or email: [admin@pridecentreofedmonton.org](mailto:admin@pridecentreofedmonton.org)



# Youth Understanding Youth



Meets every Saturday from 7pm-9pm at 10031 109 street (First Baptist Church)

[www.yuyedm.ca](http://www.yuyedm.ca)

[youthwrk@ualberta.ca](mailto:youthwrk@ualberta.ca)

FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANS-IDENTIFIED, TWO-SPIRITED, QUEER AND QUESTIONING YOUTH

# Grey Nuns – Gender Identity Clinic

- 3015-62 Street, Edmonton (780) 735-7145
- Must get a referral by General Physician to access the clinic





# Camp fyrefly

Make Your Summer  
Last a Lifetime

Join us this summer for fun, friendship, and amazing workshops at Camp fyrefly, Canada's only national leadership retreat for sexual minority and gender variant youth.

Please visit our website to apply or to learn how to make a charitable donation to help send a kid to camp!

[www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca](http://www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca)

Alberta  
July 22-25, 2010

Saskatchewan  
July 30-Aug 2, 2010



**ISMSS**  
Institute for Sexual Minority  
Studies and Services

**Building leadership & personal resiliency  
with Sexual Minority Youth**

[www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca](http://www.fyrefly.ualberta.ca)

**fostering, Youth, resiliency, energy, fun, leadership, yeah!**

# The Support Network



- 4th floor, 10025-106 Street (Baker Centre) (780) 482-0198
- Walk-in counseling – solution-focused approach
- First-come, first-serve basis – no appointment needed
- Availability includes mornings, afternoons and evenings, and Saturdays starting on November 1, 2011.
- There are free/low-cost options
- It is recommended that clients contact The Support Network before coming in for counseling.

# Options – Sexual Health Association

- Monday - Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm. Closed from noon until 1:00 pm
- #50, 9912 - 106 Street Edmonton (780) 423-3737
- E-mail: [options@optionssexualhealth.ca](mailto:options@optionssexualhealth.ca)
- OPTIONS Sexual Health Association is a pro-choice, charitable organization that provides sexual health education and counselling services in Edmonton and surrounding Communities.

*Healthy Sexuality  
Throughout the Lifespan*

**OPTIONS**  
SEXUAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION