

# Homelessness in Fredericton, 2011-2013

Report Card on Homelessness  
 "Building Blocks for Action"



This is a combined 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Report Card on Homelessness in Fredericton, NB. Using data from 2011-2013, it presents a profile of homelessness in Fredericton, NB. This Report Card is released by the Fredericton Community Action Group on Homelessness, a joint community program of non-profit agencies, government representatives and community leaders who are working together to end homelessness.



As of December 2013, **58 homeless or at-risk individuals** have been assisted with finding and maintaining permanent homes by the **Supportive Network (SUN)** – see p.4 for more details.

347

320

304

2011-12

2012-13

2013-14

**Partners for Youth's Outreach Project** has helped hundreds! See page 3 for more about the Outreach Project.



**The John Howard Society of Fredericton's** Supportive Housing Program has led to **significant reductions** in their tenants' use of other services. After just 3 years, there has been a 44% reduction in emergency services, a 94% reduction in criminal justice, an 89% reduction in hospitalization, and a 100% reduction in shelter usage by tenants.

## Homelessness & Shelter

	2011	2012	2013
# Unique individuals who stayed at an emergency shelter in Fredericton	298	262	256
# Youth assisted through transitional housing for youth in Fredericton*	35	29	34
# Women (w) and children (c) who stayed at a Fredericton transition house (April 1 2010- March 31 2013)**	207 w 151 c	148 w 123 c	111 w 93 c
Average # of Child-in-Care Cases (Fredericton Region)	72	75	74

\* Youth in Transition/ Chrysalis House served female youth ages 16-19. The service is co-ed as of early 2014.

\*\* Includes Women in Transition House, Gignoo Transition House, & Liberty Lane Inc.

## Homelessness & Housing

	2011	2012	2013
Average # of Persons on the Housing Waitlist (Fredericton Region)	1,097	1,312	1,236
Market rental vacancy (month of October)	2.5%	4.0%	6.2%
Market rental average rent for 2-bedroom apartment (month of October)	\$747	\$771	\$785
# of Affordable Housing Units Created	89	8	127

## Homelessness & Hunger

	2011	2012	2013
Approx. # Individuals assisted by Food Banks (month of March)	2,968	2,592	3,099
Approx. # Meals served by the Fredericton Community Kitchen (month of March)	14,064	12,792	13,698

\*Reflective of the Fredericton Food Bank, Salvation Army Food Bank, and Oromocto Food Bank.

## Homelessness & Income

	2011	2012	2013
Average # of Social Assistance Cases (Fredericton Region)	4,475	4,527	4,424
Social Assistance Rate for a Single Person (on Transitional Assistance Program)	\$537	\$537	\$537
Minimum Wage (NB rate)	\$9.50	\$10.00	\$10.00

References Available Upon Request.

# Defining homelessness

The Community Action Group on Homelessness supports the [Canadian Homelessness Research Network's definition and typology of homelessness](#).

**Homelessness** describes the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it. It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination. Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, stressful and distressing.

Homelessness describes a range of housing and shelter circumstances, including:

- 1) **Unsheltered, or absolutely homeless** and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation;
- 2) **Emergency Sheltered**, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence;
- 3) **Provisionally Accommodated**, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure; and finally,
- 4) **At Risk of Homelessness**, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards. It should be noted that for many people homelessness is not a static state but rather a fluid experience, where one's shelter circumstances and options may shift and change quite dramatically and with frequency.

**4 out of 5 Homeless Canadians are "Hidden Homeless"—According to a national organization, Raising the Roof, "hidden homelessness" refers to those who are "couch surfing," living in vehicles, or who are improperly housed and/or at risk of eviction.**

- **An end to homelessness is possible.** In 2013, Fredericton announced that it would be developing a Multi-Year Plan to End Homelessness that aims to engage the entire community in the solution. The Plan is scheduled to be launched in November 2014.

- **A system built around "Housing First" works best.** *Housing First* seeks to rapidly re-house individuals as quickly as possible and then begin to work on the issues that contributed to their homelessness from the stability and safety of a home. *Housing First* programs respect client choice, follow a harm reduction approach and see permanent housing as a basic human right.

- **There is a strong business case for ending homelessness.** The cost of managing homelessness through emergency and institutional interventions is much higher than ending homelessness by providing appropriate housing and supports.

**Chronic Homelessness** – Individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year.

**Episodic Homelessness** – Individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.

*(Source: Homelessness Partnering Strategy)*

# Fredericton Updates

*The theme for the 2014 Report Card on Homelessness is “Building Blocks for Action,” because we are laying the foundation for a community without homelessness. Certainly, we can build upon the progress made over the past three years. The number of unique individuals who stayed at an emergency shelter decreased by 14% between 2011 and 2013, and 224 new affordable housing units were created. The updates below speak to some of the other accomplishments our community has made. However, this Report Card also informs us of areas for further action. The number of individuals relying on food banks is on the rise, as is the cost of living. Waitlists for NB Housing remain high, which speaks to the need for more affordable housing in Fredericton. There is a consistent need for transitional housing for women, children, and youth. Our Plan to End Homelessness will target these and other areas for action that will address the current needs and prevent future homelessness.*

**The Department of Social Development** is actively working to end homelessness in the Fredericton area. Over the last three years, 22 new affordable non-elderly single units have been built under the Canada/New-Brunswick Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement. In addition, 14 new portable rent supplement units have been added in the last year to support persons with disabilities who are working with service agencies. The Fredericton region set allocation targets in 2011 to better service the homeless population. This led to immediate reductions in shelter usage. The region increased its targets in 2014 in order to further assist in reducing homelessness. Regional staff are active participants in all community homelessness related committees. Since 2011, the department has increased funding to Fredericton area shelters as well as added a contract for the delivery of outreach services in the community. The Province of New Brunswick is mindful of how important its role is – and will continue to be – in helping people access affordable housing and addressing homelessness in this province.



**The City of Fredericton Affordable Housing Committee** is a community educator and advocate for the provision of affordable housing in the city. Annual Affordable Housing Day forums continue to raise awareness and attract large and engaged public audiences. The private sector has actively stepped forward to construct affordable rentals, city zoning by-laws have been revised to encourage affordable housing development. The Committee will continue its advocacy, and will support the CAGH's Plan to End Homelessness.

**Fredericton Community Food Centre's** vision is to provide people with emergency access to high-quality food in a dignified setting that does not comprise self-worth. It is a welcoming space where people come together to grow, cook, share and advocate for good food. The new Teaching Kitchen offers cooking workshops on preparing healthy low cost foods. The Greener Village Community Gardens is an urban-agriculture project that produces and provides access to healthy food while fostering environmental stewardship and addressing issues of food security.



**Fredericton Clinical Outreach Services (the Outreach Project).** Since April 2010, Partners for Youth Inc. (PFY) has provided housing-focused outreach services that assist individuals with accessing housing, income, and supports as soon as possible. Three full-time registered social workers connect with people in the emergency shelter system, at the community kitchen and through various community based locations. One social worker provides ongoing support to individuals once they are housed. The other two work to prevent housing loss, help move people out of the shelter system, liaise with landlords, and access community support and resources.

**The Fredericton Homeless Shelters Inc.** offers emergency and transitional shelter to homeless individuals. Our focus is on re-housing residents to permanent homes through a Housing First philosophy. We work closely with community partners, such as Fredericton Outreach Services, Mental Health and Addictions, Social Development, and the John Howard Society, to provide assistance to all who come through our doors. Our approach is resident driven, restoring dignity and a sense of worth to those most vulnerable. We believe that everyone has something to contribute, no matter what their circumstance, and that everyone deserves better than to live in a shelter.





**The John Howard Society of Fredericton's Supportive Housing Program** works with non-elderly single people that have been, or are currently, homeless. Our program follows the Housing First model, with establishing safe and secure housing with supports as the primary objective.

**Liberty Lane Inc.'s** goal is "to enable women and their children who have experienced family violence to attain personal and economic independence and a future free of violence." Second Stage Housing is transitional housing offering on-site support. The women who live in the eight-unit apartment building sign one year leases, pay affordable rent, and work on individual goals. The outreach program provides safety planning, referrals, accompaniment to appointments, a sympathetic ear and self-development groups to assist women in the community who are still with or have left their abusive partner.



**The SUN (Supportive Network)** was established in April 2010 by community partners to support people who are chronically homeless to move into permanent affordable housing. The network includes a cross-section of social and community groups, local faith groups, and government. As of December 2013, 58 people who were living in shelters or were at risk of becoming homeless have been provided with affordable housing and on-going support.

**The Wednesday at Wilmot (W@W) Program** offers a safe and supportive environment for marginalized and at-risk people in the Fredericton area. Every Wednesday morning from September through June, volunteers provide a welcoming place to socialize, a nutritious breakfast, and information on helpful local programs and services. Community social workers are on hand to talk to individuals about education, employment, housing or personal matters. Guests may access vouchers for Victory Meat Market every three months. In 2012/2013 food vouchers totaling \$12,910 were distributed to 542 individuals.



**Youth in Transition Fredericton Inc. (YIT)** has recently embarked on a new and exciting journey. Research conducted in 2012 showed a gap in services for homeless and at-risk male youth ages 16-18 in the Fredericton area. The overall recommendation from the research was for Youth in Transition to adopt a Foyer Model approach, which provides a continuum of co-ed housing services, from emergency and transitional housing to supportive housing. In fall 2013, YIT made a commitment to adopt the Foyer Model approach with the ultimate goal to have Chrysalis House become co-ed by early 2014 and to work towards incorporating the other elements of the Foyer model in the future.

*Thank you to the businesses, organizations, and individuals in the Fredericton area that provide ongoing support for people who are homeless!*

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