8 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW
FOR LAUNCHING **A WAY HOME**

- Ending youth homelessness in your city -

January 2019 version

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2) WHY DEVELOP **A WAY HOME** IN YOUR CITY?
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Based on *A Way Home Community Planning Toolkit* by Alina Turner and other resources from www.awayhome.ca

www.awayhome.eu

INTRODUCTION

Between April 2018 and March 2020, a European consortium between the Flemish Agency for Youth Welfare Agency (BE), Artesis Plantijn University College - AP (BE), Cachet (BE), the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless - FEANTSA (EU), the European Network of Social Authorities - ENSA (EU) and the Carinthian Government - Social Affairs and Society (AT), Diakonie (AT) is developing the A WAY HOME EUROPE project on after care strategies for young care leavers. It is launching 3 work streams:

A) FOR LOCAL COALITIONS: the A WAY HOME EUROPE Hub
> Based on the Canadian A WAY HOME (AWH) movement and the experience of European pilot cities, the AWH EUROPE Hub will provide resources for European cities to launch and/or support local coalitions in order to reach a collective impact by generating and implementing a plan on preventing, reducing and ending youth homelessness.

B) FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS: the After Care Protocol with a toolbox and a training package
> The protocol is a set of standards, measures, actions and engagements that service providers have to fulfil regarding their clients who will leave care and also during a (limited) period after they've left care. It describes the steps that have to be put into place for successful after care trajectories that addresses the known gaps the youngster might occur, both in preparations for leaving care and for aftercare supports (legal conditions and quality standards).

C) Dissemination Activities and Communication Tools
> All the information about the project activities, seminars and materials will be available on www.awayhome.eu

This first version of the document aims at introducing stream « A » to facilitate its dissemination across European cities. It is part of the A WAY HOME EUROPE Website where more information and tools will be available and updated online: www.awayhome.eu.

The project implementation will take place in two pilot cities: Antwerp (BE) and Villach (AT), in link with other European AWH projects in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

1) WHAT IS A WAY HOME ?

A WAY HOME (AWH) started as a Canadian national movement, bringing together coalition partners dedicated to preventing and ending youth homelessness. It is now also being implemented in the USA, Australia and Europe.

AWH inspires and enables a range of relevant services at local level in addition to regional and national level policy makers to organize, plan and implement innovative strategies to address youth homelessness in a coordinated, measurable and impactful way.

The various local coalitions achieve this through community planning, programs, public engagement, government relations, research, partnership & collaboration, actions and by consulting both with front-line service providers and youth with lived experience (http://awayhome.ca). **This project aims at facilitating the emergence of AWH coalitions in Europe focusing on the mobilization of local stakeholders at city level.**

Based on the strengths of service providers and local networks (formal or informal), this structural approach will help you to achieve [COLLECTIVE IMPACT](#)[*], using:
- a Common Agenda
- Shared Measurement Systems
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support Organizations

The A WAY HOME movement offers you support and tools to:

- create/enhance a local coalition
. How to develop the structure?
. How to identify stakeholders?
. How to design a workplan & budget?

- organize a catalyst event and launch local stakeholder engagement
. Developing a vision & mission
. What are the guiding principles (prevention, emergency, housing & support)?
. How to engage different stakeholders?

- develop a common plan
. What are resources are available or needed?
. What data & research is available?
. How do you consult with partners and stakeholders?
. Setting priorities
. Identifying objectives
. Managing costs and performances
. Agreeing targets and indicators

- Implement the plan
. What is the timeline?
. What are the actions?
. Existing actions
. Aftercare toolkit for service providers
. New actions

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[*] See the Key Concepts page on www.awayhome.eu & www.collectiveimpactforum.org

2) WHY DEVELOP « A WAY HOME » IN YOUR CITY ?

Research has consistently shown that **the causes and impacts of youth homelessness are distinct from adult homelessness,** thus the plans and interventions to be implemented must be correspondingly distinct and tailored to youth.

Youth experiencing homelessness are **often less visible and precariously housed** (couch surfing) but also staying in youth and adult shelters or sleeping rough.

Youth homelessness exists within a broad and complex spectrum of circumstances primarily underlined by family conflict. **It goes beyond a loss of stable housing**: it is the loss of a home in which they are embedded in relations of dependence. This creates an interruption and potential rupture in social relations with parents and caregivers, family members, friends, neighbours and community.

In addition to experiencing economic deprivation and a lack of secure housing, **many young people who are homeless lack the personal experience of living independently and at the same time may be in the throes of significant developmental (social, physical, emotional and cognitive) changes. As a result, they may not have the resources, resilience, education, social supports or life skills necessary to foster a safe and nurturing transition to adulthood and independence.** These challenges are often complicated by the fact that they are simultaneously dealing with life-altering events such as recent trauma and/or violence.

In some communities, LGBT, immigrant and visible minority youth are overrepresented.
A high percentage of homeless youth were also previously in the care of child protection services, making system responses a priority in any efforts to end youth homelessness.

Thus, ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS[*] requires the implementation of innovative programs and housing solutions tailored for the specific needs of young people, and structural changes within the operations of homeless-serving systems as well as of mainstream systems.

It's important to highlight that the main shift advanced by a plan to end youth homelessness refocuses our efforts on prevention and strategies that move people quickly out of homelessness into housing with supports, as opposed to emergency supports. This may challenge the prevailing norms in a community. No solution to end homelessness can or should depend wholly on the efforts of those in the homeless-serving sector.

Rather than 'managing' homelessness through emergency services, a strong prevention approach mandate action from mainstream systems and departments of government in cooperation with the homeless-serving sector. The transformation of public systems, including child welfare, education, mental health, income supports and criminal justice and their enhanced integration, which can facilitate broad systems of care, is essential.

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[*] See the Key Concepts on www.awayhome.eu

3) DO YOU NEED A SPECIFIC PLAN TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS ?

Your city may already have measures underway to address youth homelessness within broader strategies but are these measures explicitly integrated in a specific intersectoral youth homelessness plan in order to monitor the foreseen outcomes accordingly?

A youth specific plan to fight homelessness is relevant where:
- There is interest in youth homelessness, but not necessarily knowledge of the specific actions needed to address it
- There is a willingness to shift the homeless response from managing the crisis (through emergency services) to a prevention focus that includes moving young people out of homelessness rapidly
- The community has the infrastructure and resources to take on the coordination and development of a youth-specific strategy
- The community has a means of advancing implementation of a youth plan and monitoring progress
- There is already significant movement on youth homelessness, which could benefit from strategic coordination to maximize impact
- Political changes may be underway which could create a structural opening to advance system reform and funding asks to support an end to youth homelessness
- An infusion of resources (government, private, etc.) has been introduced that could be molded to advance ending youth homelessness goals if community leadership coalesced.

An effective youth plan:
- Includes a statement of **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**[*] and **core values**
- **Engages the necessary players** from the community, all levels of government and the non-profit and private sectors to work toward real reductions in homelessness
- Depends on **collaboration** among a wide range of stakeholders including funders, governments, service providers (mainstream as well as homeless-serving organizations) and those affected by homelessness
- Articulates **necessary actions**[†] at the service, local and government levels
- **Involves young people** in planning, delivery and evaluation
- Has **clearly articulated** research and data, goals and objectives, milestones, responsibilities, benchmarks and measurable targets
- Outlines the **resources** needed for implementation, including projected budgets and cost-savings
- **Provides direction on implementation actions and governance options** to move actions forward
- Leads to **real outcomes and changes** in young people's lives
- Is a '**living plan**' renewed on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance and progress is maintained

When starting a new planning process, it is important to consider proper consultation and buy-in from critical stakeholders, to be evidence based and to foresee the implementation phase.

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[*] See the "Guiding Principles" on www.awayhome.eu (coming soon)
[†] See the "Resources" page on www.awayhome.eu

4) HOW TO BUILD A LOCAL COALITION ?

Most European cities have various stakeholders already engaged in different homelessness and/or youth programs but not always articulated within a local coalition sharing common objectives.

We propose to set up a specific A WAY HOME planning team. This team will develop a specific plan, usually aiming at "preventing, reducing and ending youth homelessness" and combining actuals programs with new ones (i.e.: prevention).

The structure of this planning team will always depend on the city context and resources. You might consider working with:
- **Backbone support organization(s):** these organizations have the capacity to organize meetings, bring together stakeholders, are respected, trusted and capable of delivering the local plan.
- **A steering committee & working committees:** 10-20 leaders from public institutions (child protection, social services, education, justice, health, employment, etc.), youth, non-profit service providers, private sector (landlords, private foundations…), research and faith communities…
- **Project manager(s):** Ideally, the project manager is almost exclusively dedicated to supporting the plan development process for a set period of time. Acting as the driver for the duration of the process, the person charged with this role will have tremendous impact on the overall success of the effort.
- **Consultants and experts:** As you contemplate resources, the workload or the expertise needed, you might want to consider out sourcing some tasks.

Given that ending youth homelessness is a COLLECTIVE IMPACT endeavor (see chapter 5), it is useful to assess the community "readiness" by identifying which preconditions the actual existing local networks and/or potential stakeholders are well prepared for or will need further investment in:
- *A Way Home* backbone support organizations
- Communication
- Common agenda
- Shared measurement
- Actual state of the local planning & strategy development
- Organizational infrastructure & funding
- Coordinated service delivery
- Integrated information management
- Performance management & Quality insurance
- System integration & Government support
- Community engagement

An important step for starting a local coalition and launching the planning process is the organization of a CATALYST EVENT (see chapter 7).

A plan can be a vehicle for action; as such, the planning process can be conceived as an intentional relationship and trust-building effort to support eventual implementation of actions.
Those leading planning should manage expectations of stakeholders around what a plan can actually achieve. This means being very clear from the start on what the scope of the youth plan is and, importantly, is not. Ensuring that stakeholders are clear on the objectives of the planning process and can refer back to these throughout will be essential to staying on track.

5) WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF THE STAKEHOLDERS ?

The role of each stakeholder and the value they bring to the fight to end youth homelessness is best realised through the COLLECTIVE IMPACT[*] framework.

Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem. In order to create lasting solutions to social problems on a large scale, organizations – including those in government, civil society and the business sector – need to coordinate their efforts and work together around a clearly defined goal. Collective impact is a significant shift from the social sector's current paradigm of 'isolated impact,' because the underlying premise of collective impact is that no single organization can create large-scale, lasting social change alone. There is no 'silver bullet' solution to systemic social problems and these problems cannot be solved by simply scaling or replicating one organization or program.

Conditions for generating Collective Impact include:
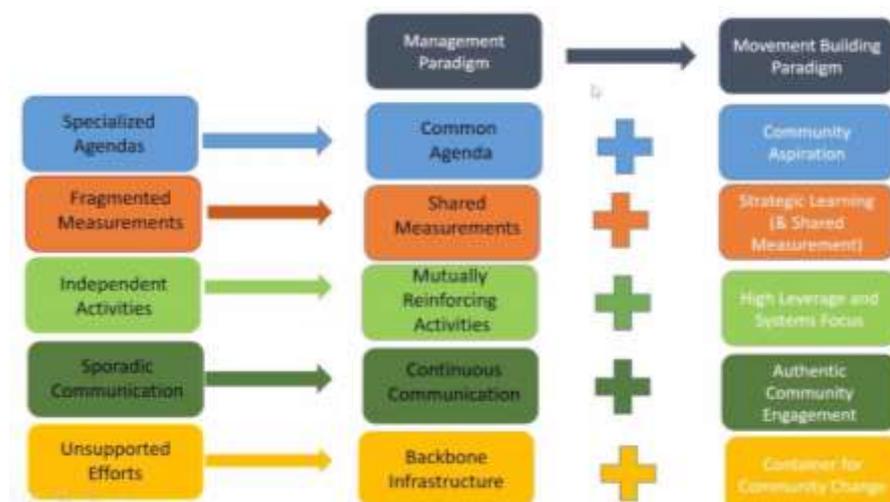
In using Collective Impact each stakeholder will have to move away from the individual or isolated impact and consider how their organisation can contribute towards the collective impact. By way of example this can mean a school, rather than looking at purely the educational outcome of a student, will also look at the child's overall wellbeing. This is important as it can recognise patterns or risk factors that are related to youth homelessness, which can be used to better develop targeted prevention strategies. Through Collective Impact homeless service providers can better understand how to support young people in education and develop services accordingly. The result is better prevention in schools[†], and where a young person may still become homeless then services that can ensure they don't fall out of education.

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[*] See the Key Concepts page on www.awayhome.eu & www.collectiveimpactforum.org
[†] See, for example, http://www.thegeelongproject.com.au/

Thus, the involvement of each stakeholders towards reaching collective impact at a city level will depend of the institutions they represent and their level of engagement within the planning team:

> **- Backbone support organizations activities:** to guide vision and strategy, to support aligned activities, to establish shared measurement practices, to build public will, to advance policy, to mobilize funding, to undertake research and analysis and to write the actual plan document.
> **- Steering committee & working committees activities:** to access critical information for the plan development work, to engage in defining the plan, to open doors to potential allies that can push the plan forward in implementation, to engage influential public servants, to engage their respective networks to support plan activities during the early stages of development as well as into implementation, to help elevate the community's understanding of youth homelessness and how to end it and to advance innovative solutions, policy and systems change in their respective circles of influence and with government.
> **- Project manager(s):** to oversee all aspects of the planning process and, ideally, to follow the delivery of the workplan activities.
> **- Consultants and experts:** when needed, to take on part of the research, the consultation, technical or communication aspects…
> - **Founders, specific communities, media**: to be engaged

The European A WAY HOME website will provide on a ongoing basis concrete descriptions on how different cities or regions (Antwerp, Villach, Wales, Scotland…) organize their local coalitions, proposing examples of different types of partnership, types of stakeholders involved and how they are working together.

6) WHICH RESOURCES DO YOU NEED ?

A Way Home is all about generating a coalition of the willing, developing a common plan, implementing and evaluating the plan's actions. The human resources and budget needed for each of these steps differ from city to city depending on the service providers and public institutions involvement, existing plans and the types of programs already running.

A first workplan is necessary to outline the resources needed and the key components of the work involved, estimate hours needed to complete and identify responsible individuals and timelines for
> **- Research & policy review**
> **- Key stakeholder interviews**
> **- Community roundtables**
> **- Youth voice participation**
> **- Drafting plan development**
> **- Planning feedback**
> **- Finalizing and launching the plan.**
> **- Implementing and monitoring programs**

It can go from a low budget (one dedicated manager, in-kind contribution from stakeholders, improving existing services) to high level resources (dedicated team of specialists, new budget lines, implementing new programs and housing solutions). You might want to consider:

Management: It is advisable that you have a lead project manager dedicated to drafting a first workplan, seeing the plan development through to completion and overseeing various aspects of the process even if they are not necessarily doing all the work themselves. You will have to build a team to provide guidance to the project manager as well and may want to bring in external expertise where you need it.

In-kind contribution can be provided for: steering committee time, working committee time, researcher contributions, key stakeholders participation, charismatic and influential communicator, facility costs provided in kind for consultations/meetings, backbone supports administration/hosting costs, Backbone supports in-kind secondment of project manager time,…

Consultation Needs and Approach: The number of stakeholders you need to engage and the level of engagement they require will impact timelines significantly and have budget implications. If your stakeholders are spread out, you will have to develop a consultation strategy that reaches across sectors as well. You may also have specific groups or persons that need to be approached individually for political reasons, thereby increasing the time you have to spend on engagement.

Data and Research: In some contexts, data and information are abundant and readily available. This is unfortunately the exception rather than the norm; barriers to accessing the needed information will impact your capacity to deliver your local A WAY HOME plan. It will also impact its quality, especially if data is unavailable or poorly analysed. In some cases, the plan development process will necessarily include a data collection component to make up for the lack of information – such as a youth survey or homeless count.

Political Changes that may impact the government's receptiveness to the plan should be considered. If a major change is afoot, such as a looming election, there may be opportunities to leverage these shifts to engage political players in the issue.

7) HOW TO START YOUR LOCAL COALITION

An efficient way to start is to invite the stakeholders to a local CATALYST EVENT: the COMMUNITY PLANNING INSTITUTE, a large scale event bringing together the stakeholders (usual and unusual suspects) who have a role to play in preventing and ending youth homelessness.

It is critical to launching A Way Home in you city. It provides a platform to bring different stakeholders together and identifies what their role is in combatting youth homelessness. Together they can collaborate in developing the local plan, have a sense of ownership and design a plan for the future which can be used as follow-up.

The key goals will be to:
- Build community capacity to develop and implement plans to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness
- Increase knowledge regarding effective planning and program models to support this end
- Enhance local collaboration through Collective Impact
- Create and engage the stakeholders into a local A WAY HOME movement

The content and structure of the event will depend on the COMMUNITY READINESS ASSESSMENT (Are the Collective Impact conditions present or not?), the actual link between stakeholders, the local situation…

A two or three days working program can be developed including specific presentations and tools to insure the active engagement of the participants. You might want to consider the following topics:

- Collective Impact
- Introduction to planning, prevent, reduce and end Youth Homelessness
- What is Collective Impact and how will it support this process?
- Developing a Theory of Change*
- Who should be at the table and when?
- How should young people be engaged?
- Building the movement

- Community Mobilization for creating a Plan to Prevent, Reduce and End Youth Homelessness
- Paradigm shifting – reimagining the response to youth homelessness
- Elements of a strategy to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness
- Community planning: essentials
- Lessons learned: successes and challenges
- Effective program models to support youth homelessness prevention, and assisting young people to move out of homelessness in a safe, planned and sustainable way
- Government collaboration and leadership through a cross-ministry approach to advancing priority areas
- Considerations for priority populations (LGBT, Newcomers, etc.), rural youth homelessness

- Case studies & network structure examples from other A WAY HOME cities

- Implementation framework – What happens when you return home?
- Community assessment: tools for thinking, engaging and mobilizing locally
- Baseline data – what do you know about youth homelessness?

- Setting targets for reducing youth homeless – young people leaving homelessness, reducing young people falling into homelessness
- Resources to support this work
- Using data and performance management
- Defining your local A WAY HOME project
- Mobilizing what you have learned, identification of next steps

As an example, the Catalyst Event program used to launch A WAY HOME in Antwerp will be available on www.awayhome.eu

8) HOW TO IMPLEMENT « A WAY HOME » ?

Your planning team should work out the foundational elements of the plan early on, particularly **the vision, mission and guiding principles of the initiative.** The principles you propose to uphold through the work of the plan will guide the type of strategies and actions you aim to undertake. As such, these principles not only have to resonate locally, but **they also have to align with the existing body of evidence on effective responses to youth homelessness**, such as: Housing First, a Human Rights Approach, Prevention-focused System Planning & Integration, Cross-sectoral Collaboration and Youth-centred Approach.

Developing a plan to end youth homelessness involves research, analysis, consultation, synthesis of information, solution development, decision making and implementation. It should also involve an evaluation and course correction. As your city is likely to already be involved in this cycle, you don't have to go through these steps in sequence but consider each as a part of the plan's development process to be explicitly defined during the process.

A - GROUNDING YOUR PLAN IN EVIDENCE
You must develop a solid understanding of the body of evidence on youth homelessness and what it takes to end it. This involves not only becoming proficient in the existing research on youth homelessness and available local information, but also taking on additional data collection and analysis if needed. So, what type of information do you need and how do you get it? This will depend on the level of coordination and data sharing in your community, as well as your research and 'detective' skills to get a hold of necessary information. However, **there are certain pieces of data you will be able to access as a starting point. Use this information to paint a comprehensive picture of community capacity and gaps, which you can confirm in the consultation phases further.**
You might want to consider:

- **A research agenda**: engaging with local researchers in the beginning of the process.

- **Locating information on**: housing market, demographics, housing need, homeless counts, shelter utilization, service use, best practice reviews, policy review, strategic initiatives, local research,…

- **Conducting research**: acquiring specific information where there is a lack of local data.

- **Policy analysis**: How are youth and homelessness being addressed within various public institutions strategies? What advocacy role have taken on local NGOs?

- **Aligning with local initiatives**: articulating how the youth plan 'fits' with other priorities of the community, where sometimes projects are competing for scarce resources.

- **Service system mapping**: for understanding current resources, a basis for analysing gaps and for identifying the potential organizations you need to engage. Be strategic about how you engage with and assess youth homelessness when it comes to adult-serving agencies. It is essential that your plan address youth homelessness, not the youth-serving system. Homeless youth often access adult shelters and services. Failing to recognize and include such providers in your planning work will hinder your initial assessment of the local situation and the solutions you generate.

Research and data on youth homelessness is important for two reasons. First, you must build a rationale for action. Why should youth homelessness be a local priority? Second, the solutions contained within your plan must be based on evidence:

- How many youth are experiencing homelessness?
- What are their needs?
- What are their demographics?
- What are their pathways into homelessness?
- What would work best for whom and when?
- What are emerging trends we need to be aware of?
- What solutions work well? Or have proven to be less effective?
- How do policies and practices within agencies and government departments impact youth homelessness?
- What is the cost of the status quo? What is the cost of resolving the issue?

B - THE CONSULTATION PROCESS
Carefully consider the :

- Who : determining who needs to be consulted
- What : what the subject matter of the consultation is
- When : determining the timing of consultations and when you have consulted enough
- Why : the purpose of the consultation helps shape the 'how' and 'where' of consultation
  For each stakeholder, consider the following:
  . Are you simply letting them know that a youth plan is being developed?
  . Are you seeking input into proposed strategies?
  . Do you want the stakeholder to co-own the solutions?
- Where : determining appropriate location(s) to hold consultations
- How : determining best methods for consultation

There are distinct levels of consultation: inform, gather information, discuss or involve, engage and partner. Regardless of your approach, use the consultation process to build trust and goodwill.

C - WRITING THE PLAN
A plan to end youth homelessness is not drastically different from a strategic plan or business plan; however, its scope is much wider than that of a single agency or government department/ministry. **Thus, while elements of the plan content may seem familiar at first glance, the scope is much broader because of the diverse systems and stakeholders it aims to coalesce into a coherent strategy.**

If you consider the key elements of the plan at the same time as building your research and consultation processes, you will be able to develop the content of your plan as you go through the development process, rather than waiting until the end. Remember, drafting the plan is not a linear process. You may find yourself having to return to the research or consultation phases to fill in gaps or re-examine your assumptions.

The plan is largely a technical report. Therefore, it is important that your writer(s) have the skills to develop the content based on the quantitative and qualitative data available. It is always a 'bonus' to have someone who can actually take on the financial and performance modelling, and is an effective communicator able to distil complex concepts into concise communications. It is their role to work with the broader planning group to affirm the direction taken and even go back to community stakeholders for further input.

- Setting priorities

To operationalize a prevention-focused approach, your youth plan should cover four Youth Plan Priorities. **These four elements are synthesized from the existing body of evidence and are commonly found in existing plans.** While you should adapt these locally, according to your community's priorities and needs, the general approach should remain consistent across communities:

> **1- Prevention** can include measures that specifically target youth at risk of homelessness, through such programs as family mediation/reunification, working with the education system to identify those at risk earlier and developing policy options that can ensure youth are better supported in transitioning from foster care. The focus here is working upstream to identify those at risk of homelessness and putting in place interventions that effectively mitigate such risks.
>
> **2- System planning and integration** refers to the type of reorganization actions you will need to introduce to ensure your local system serves youth effectively and efficiently. This includes introducing ways of managing the flow of clients better through coordinated entry, having consistent performance management and quality assurance standards in place, but also developing processes to link the youth-serving system to the public systems as well. Discharge protocols for youth coming out of treatment or finding ways to coordinate services between diverse systems can be included in this priority area.
>
> **3- Housing and supports** refers to the network of services and accommodation options necessary to end homelessness for youth; diverse and appropriate housing and supports (case management, income assistance, education, health care, etc.) ensure that once rehoused, youth do not fall back into homelessness. To achieve this, you may need to expand particular program types or introduce new program models and housing stock. You may also need to rethink how services are delivered in practice. The way your emergency shelters and transitional housing program operate can also be re-envisioned to move youth into permanent housing quicker, for instance. The Housing First Framework for Youth provides guidance on housing options and supports designed to meet the needs of young people in a way that supports not only housing retention but also a supportive transition to adulthood.
>
> **4- Leadership, engagement and resources** are needed to execute the vision set out in the plan. This includes funding, organizational infrastructure, champions to promote the solutions to diverse audiences and shared accountability among stakeholders for ending youth homelessness. Additionally, you may include public education measures to raise awareness about preventing and ending youth homelessness. You may also plan for a research agenda to enhance knowledge about the issue and advance a policy agenda to various levels of government.

- Defining objectives

These should be action oriented and reflect both best practices and community-identified needs. Be strategic and succinct in how these are presented, but provide sufficient rationale as to why the goals within the plan are priorities. Further, build on existing efforts and link with ongoing government or community initiatives where possible.

- Plan costs and performances

Consider developing an evidenced-based cost argument. If the vision set out in the plan were to be realised, what would the impact be? This will help you build a solid business case to funders and government, but will also help you distil your goals. Your research and consultation may have told you new housing and supports were needed, but how much of what program/housing? How much would this cost and to what effect? Releasing a youth plan without an indication of the resources

required to execute it will pose a legitimacy risk. Though other plans make it look easy, with infographics and simple figures, the analysis that goes behind such business cases is no easy feat. You may also not have the necessary data to complete the modelling. **Know however, that without a solid articulation of the impact that the proposed measures will have and the cost of these, it is going to be more difficult to credibly approach decision makers to support and invest in the plan.**

- Setting targets and performance indicators
Without setting some measurable indicators, your plan will not trigger any evidence-based means of implementation tracking either. It is best to set some performance expectations from the start. **This is also another way of showing what you mean by ending youth homelessness – how do you know you're making progress? Ensuring stakeholders have input on this issue will also be essential to buy-in for the plan. In fact, this is one of the essentials of collective impact (shared measurement).**

It goes without saying that these are developed using the research and analysis you have undertaken, versus 'being pulled out of thin air.' Indicators should be evidenced-based and aligned with your vision, but also realistic from a data collection perspective. Give thought as to how these are collected and reported to the community moving forward. Stakeholders that provide data into this effort should have a say in what is being collected and how it's interpreted for wider audiences, particularly when it impacts funding allocation.

D – LAUNCHING THE PLAN
Once you have a draft of the plan, consider how the final document will be released to the community. Many communities organize launch events, celebrating the culmination of the effort with stakeholders from across sectors.

Consider the launch as another opportunity to engage with youth – including those who participated in your consultation; youth can be creative and take active roles in planning and hosting the launch. Involve media and politicians, leveraging it as an opportunity to raise awareness about youth homelessness broadly.

Ensure the plan is shared with key departments ahead of its release, allowing adequate time for administration to prepare ministers with issue briefs.

Prepare communication materials that are easy to read, catchy and to the point. While you may have the full report ready, it may be more effective to launch short summary documents, briefs, infographics and use social media to get the word out. News releases are essential and you may consider hosting a media conference.

E – EVALUATING & SUSTAINING
Certain plans include a detailed implementation framework that outlines accountabilities and timelines for achieving the proposed outcomes. This will be an important consideration as you develop your plan. Will you give direction regarding governance matters, for instance? How will progress be reviewed and communicated?

A review cycle can be undertaken on an annual or even three-year basis to ensure that implementation of the plan is consistently reviewed and adjustments to implementation are made. Ultimately, it is the linking of the seemingly mundane activities of plan implementation to broader systems thinking that is one of the hallmarks of a systems approach to ending homelessness.

For communities considering implementation options in further detail, *A Way Home Canada* has developed a draft evaluation framework to be used in exploring implementation learning from communities with youth plans already underway. The Evaluation Framework (developed by Oriole Research & Design) offers useful questions that communities can use to reflect as they prepare and engage in plan implementation.

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Useful tools, plans and resources can be found on:
- https://awayhome.eu/way-home-model/resources
- http://awayhome.ca/resources-and-tools-main/
- https://www.feantsa.org/en/themes