

# LGBTQ2S BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

## DEVELOPING EDUCATION

Training and employment programs for people experiencing homelessness should consider exacerbating factors:

- lack of a permanent address
- lack of access to bathing and nutritional resources
- physical and mental health concerns
- challenges with addictions



Many LGBTQ2S youth could benefit from inclusive skills-based training such as job readiness, money management, cooking, etc.



Securing employment can be especially difficult for LGBTQ2S youth who are street-involved or homeless, due to ageism, homophobia, transphobia, racism, etc.



LGBTQ2S youth may experience limited access to employment and housing, due to social exclusion.

## EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION LEVELS



**77%**

HOMELESS YOUTH ARE UNEMPLOYED

**57-65%**

HOMELESS YOUTH DROP OUT OF SCHOOL

**65%**

FAIL TO FINISH HIGH SCHOOL

## HOMELESS YOUTH MAY ENGAGE IN “INFORMAL” ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES, QUASI-LEGAL ACTIVITIES OR CRIMINAL ACTS:



squeegeeing



sex work



'binning'

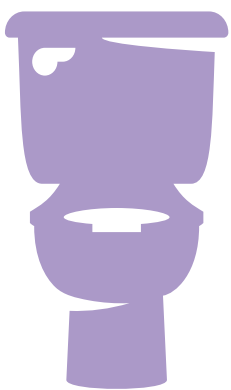


panhandling



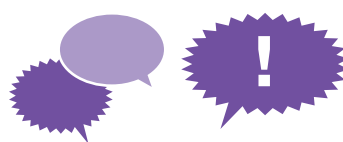
drug dealing

## TRANS YOUTH EXPERIENCE ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES WHEN TRYING TO SECURE EMPLOYMENT:



### NO ACCESS

Unable to safely access workplace restroom facilities on the basis of gender identity.



### TRANSPHOBIA

makes it difficult, if not impossible, to successfully perform one's job.



### IDENTIFICATION

Legal name and ID may not match gender expression, name or pronouns.

## WHAT CAN SHELTERS AND SUPPORT SERVICES DO TO HELP:

### TRAIN STAFF



Ensure that all frontline staff receive LGBTQ2S cultural competency training.

### BE INCLUSIVE



Ensure that shelters are LGBTQ2S safe, affirming, and inclusive.

### ASSIST CHANGES



Assist trans youth with legal name and sex marker changes if desired.

Written by Dr. Alex Abramovich (2016) SOURCES: Gaetz, S. & O'Grady, B. (2002). Making Money: Exploring the Economy of Young Homeless Workers. Work, Employment and Society 16: 433-456. Gaetz, S., O'Grady, B., & Buccieri, K. (2010). Surviving crime and violence: Street youth and victimization in Toronto. Toronto: Homeless Hub. Gaetz, S. & O'Grady, B. (2013). Why don't you just get a job? Homeless youth, social exclusion and employment training. Youth Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.

# TOP 10 REASONS HOMELESS YOUTH STRUGGLE TO FIND EMPLOYMENT

## HOMELESS YOUTH

For homeless youth who often have no phone, permanent address, appropriate clothes or resumes, job hunting can prove frustrating and futile. Many homeless youth have no experience or role models to help them navigate the workplace or meet the demands of time management and structure.

Covenant House (2013). Barriers to Employment for Homeless Youth. Top 10 reasons why homeless youth struggle to get jobs.

## LIMITED EDUCATION

A high proportion of homeless youth have breaks in their education.



## NO STABLE ADDRESS

Employers need addresses to process payroll, collect personal information and establish emergency contacts.



## EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY

Young people have often experienced traumatic events and great losses in their lives before arriving at shelters.



## BROKEN FAMILY

Many people get their first job through family connections. Without the benefit of networking amongst family, friends and community to secure employment, many homeless youth have only themselves to rely on.



## LOST ID

It is hard to maintain your belongings when homeless. Often, personal ID is lost or stolen on the street.

Legal name and ID may not match with gender expression or chosen name.



## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to interviews costs money. Homeless youth are more concerned with finding food and shelter.



## LACK OF RESOURCES

Homeless youth tend to have little to no appropriate clothing for job searching. They have less access to facilities to maintain their hygiene and are often unable to get a good night's sleep.



## LIMITED COMPUTER AND PHONE ACCESS

Most employers want to connect via email, telephone and social networks. Access to a computer, printer, and phone are vital for resume writing, and job searching.



## CHALLENGING MARKET

Due to the changes in the economy over the last few years, youth unemployment is at 14.7%—over twice the overall rate. Youth are at an even greater disadvantage as they compete with experienced and educated adults for entry level positions.

It can be especially difficult for LGBTQ2S youth who are homeless, due to homophobia, transphobia, racism.

**14.7%**  
OF YOUTH ARE UNEMPLOYED

## LACK OF HOPE

Homeless youth have been let down, heartbroken and disappointed by many of the adults in their lives. This creates a sense of hopelessness in youth. Without the support and nurturing of caring adults, they find it hard to believe that life can be more rewarding.



Written by Dr. Alex Abramovich (2016)

#ENDYOUTHHOMELESSNESS

INFOGRAPHIC DESIGN BY:  
LIGHTUPTHE SKY.CA

