



evas

**YOUR
VOICE
MATTERS:
YOUTH
SURVEY**

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YOUR VOICE MATTERS: YOUTH SURVEY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Over a four-month period in early 2018, Eva's conducted a survey of 101 young people who received services. Our intention was to learn more about who they are, why they came to Eva's, how they experienced the organization's services and supports, and what Eva's can do to improve our approaches.

SOME DEMOGRAPHICS

- 66% identified as male and 34% identified as female;
- the largest group of respondents were between ages 19 and 25;
- 85% identified as heterosexual/straight and 13% as part of LGBTQ2S+ communities;
- the two largest faith/spirituality groups identified were Christian (32%) and Islam (21%); and
- the largest ethnicity/racial group identified was Black (27%) and most respondents identify coming from nations/communities that are majority-racialized.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Sixty percent of respondents were not involved in employment, education, or training. Only 25% reported being employed.

HOUSING

With respect to housing, 56% of respondents experienced housing troubles one to three times in the past. Participants aged 15 or older were most likely to report multiple episodes of homelessness.

ABILITIES, MENTAL HEALTH, SUBSTANCE USE

By way of abilities and mental health, 15% identified a physical health diagnosis/issue, 31% identified a learning disability diagnosis/issue, and 49% identified a mental health diagnosis/issue. Seventy-two percent identified using drugs or alcohol to cope with stress, and results show a decline in mental health and wellness after experiencing housing problems.

SYSTEMS

Thirty-four percent noted some involvement with child protection systems and nine percent identified involvement with the legal system.

EXPERIENCES AT EVA'S

On an overall rating scale of one (“terrible”) to five (“amazing”), six gave a rating of one (“terrible”) or two; 27 gave a rating of three (“okay”); and 57 gave a rating of four or five (“amazing”). Participants were also asked to rate 10 aspects of being at Eva’s on a scale of one (“low”) to five (“high”). In general, about 60% of respondents indicated feeling welcome, safe, and free to be themselves. A majority said that Eva’s facilities have low gang activity and pressures to enter into sex work. Ratings around cleanliness of shared spaces and food were split quite evenly across the scale.

Respondents reflected on how Eva’s improved their life. The top three themes of responses centred on housing supports, mentorship, and food security. Respondents were also asked about supports they need that Eva’s is not providing, and 25% identified a need for more support in finding permanent housing.

INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes findings from a survey of young people, some of whom were accessing support at Eva's at the time of the survey and some of whom had received support from Eva's prior to the survey.

The purpose of this survey is to better understand what young people experiencing homelessness go through and how Eva's can provide better support to them. Over a period of about four months in early 2018, respondents were asked to share information about themselves and how they got to Eva's, as well as their experiences and thoughts about Eva's programs and approaches. Survey results will help the organization shape future plans.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Eva's would like to thank everyone who contributed to this survey process, including:

- 📌 survey respondents for sharing their thoughts and ideas;
- 📌 Eva's staff team, who assisted respondents, promoted the survey, compiled data, and confirmed results; and
- 📌 Nicholas Ramsbuck, student assistant, for detailed analysis support.

THE LAND EVA'S IS GREATFUL TO WORK ON

As we strive for justice and opportunity for young people, we must strive for justice for all. Eva's facilities stand on the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for resources around the Great Lakes. We are grateful to work here and mindful of broken covenants and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.

ABOUT EVA'S

Eva's Initiatives for Homeless Youth is an award-winning organization that provides shelter, transitional housing, and programming to help youth experiencing homelessness reach their potential to lead productive, self-sufficient, and healthy lives. 123 youth aged 16 to 24 find safe shelter and support at our facilities every night. Eva's gives youth the tools to transition out of homelessness permanently.

Eva's is named in honour of Eva Smith, a Toronto community leader who noticed that youth at-risk and those who were homeless were unrecognized and unsupported. Her advocacy led to the opening of our first facility, Eva's Place, and Eva's now runs three facilities in the City of Toronto.

- 📌 **Eva's Place:** 40-bed emergency shelter and home to the Family Reconnect Program.
- 📌 **Eva's Satellite:** 33-bed emergency shelter that also specializes in harm reduction for youth with substance use and mental health needs.

- ◆ **Eva's Phoenix:** townhouse-style transitional housing for 50 youth, providing education support and employment training.

SURVEY OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Get a “snapshot” of the young people Eva’s works with
- ◆ Better understand how young people come to us
- ◆ Better understand young peoples’ experiences while homeless and while accessing support and programs in our facilities
- ◆ Learn how we can improve our programs and services to better support young people and help them achieve better life outcomes

METHODOLOGY

2.1 QUESTIONS AND ANALYSIS

Survey responses were collected online and through paper between February 20 and June 26, 2018. The survey consisted of 25 questions, both open and close-ended (questions in Appendix).

Analysis of open-ended questions consisted of counting the frequency of similar terms and grouping them. Close-ended questions were analyzed through examining comments. Common topics were aggregated and a priority system was established to highlight key findings. The number of responses associated with a specific theme was used to assign a priority to the theme: high priority for 7 or more responses; medium priority for 4 to 6 responses; low priority for less than 3 responses.

2.2 SAMPLE

The survey was filled out across Eva’s three facilities by current and former residents and program participants. In total, 101 people completed the survey (n = 101) and each question had different response rates.

GENERAL INVOLVEMENT WITH EVA’S

Respondents were asked which of Eva’s facilities they are or have been involved with. Responses exceed 101 because some young people accessed multiple facilities.

- ◆ 53 respondents identified involvement with Eva’s Place
- ◆ 27 identified involvement at Eva’s Phoenix
- ◆ 40 identified involvement with Eva’s Satellite

Respondents were also asked to identify if they were/are residents and/or program participants, and they could select more than one category. Results are outlined below.

Total (n=99)	Number
Past resident	17
Current resident	65

Past program participant	12
Current program participant	16

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Through open-response questions, respondents identified their ages, genders, ethno-racial identities, places of birth, areas where they lived before coming to Eva's, spiritual and religious backgrounds, and sexualities.

GENDER, AGE, SEXUALITY, SPIRITUALITY/RELIGION

Total (n=101)	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender (n=97)		
Male-identified	64	66
Female-identified	33	34
Age (n=101)		
0-14	0	0
14-16	1	1
16-19	22	22
19-25	72	71
25+	6	6
Sexuality (n=78)		
Heterosexual/straight	66	85
Bisexual	6	8
Gay	4	5
Asexual	1	1
Pansexual	1	1
Spirituality/Religion (n=72)		
Christian (including Protestant, Methodist, etc.)	23	32
Islam	15	21
N/A	13	18
Catholic	7	10
Agnostic	4	6
Orthodox	2	3
Hinduism	1	1
Judaism	1	1
Rastafari	1	1
Spiritual	1	1
Guardian of Light	1	1
Wiccan	1	1
Voodoo	1	1

The age of respondents ranged from 14 to 30. The national survey on youth homelessness groups ages into three categories: young adults (19-25), mid-adolescents (16-19), and early adolescents (14-16) (Gaetz, O'Grady, Kidd, & Schwan, 2016). In our survey, 71% of respondents were young adults, 22% were mid-adolescents, and 1% were early adolescents.

According to the national survey on youth homelessness, 29.5% of young people experiencing homelessness in Canada identify as LGBTQ2S+ (Gaetz, O'Grady, Kidd, & Schwan, 2016). In our survey, 15% of respondents identified as bisexual, gay, asexual, or pansexual.

Respondents also self-identified gender. The majority of respondents identified as men/male. No respondents identified as trans, genderqueer, non-binary, two-spirit, or other gender diverse categories. Four respondents did not disclose their genders.

ETHNO-RACIAL IDENTITIES AND COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Respondents self-identified ethno-racial identities and countries of origin. Many of the young people surveyed were racialized. The majority identified as Black (27%) and most identified coming from nations/communities that are majority-racialized, including the Caribbean, Africa, and South Asia. No young people in this survey self-identified as Indigenous.

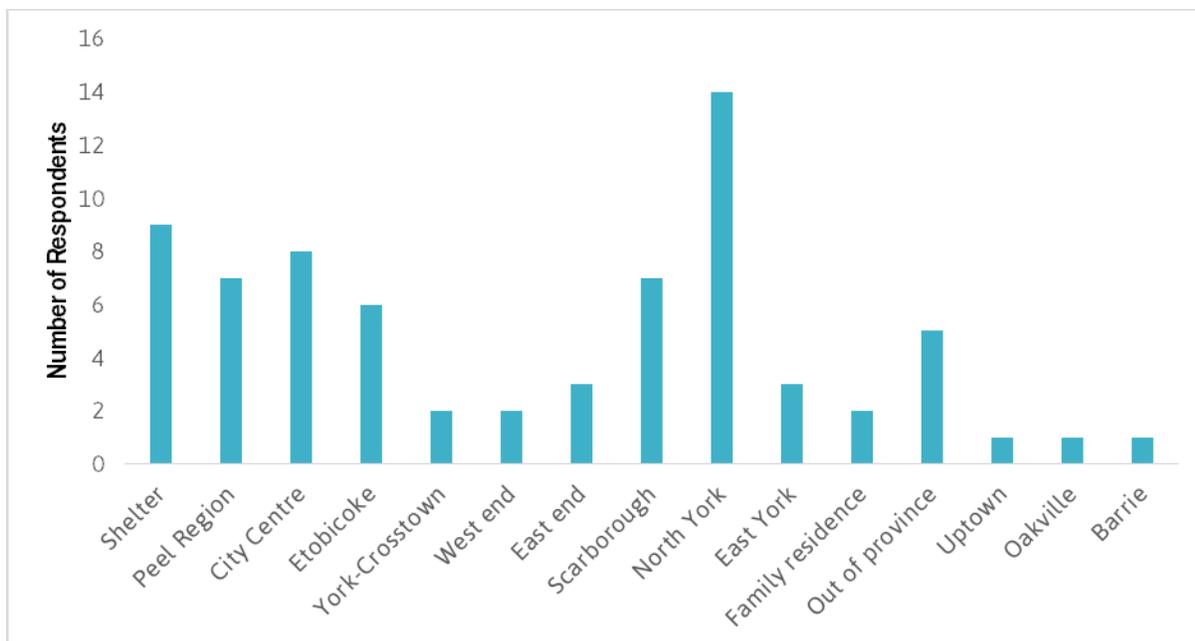
Total (n=90)	Number	Percentage (%)
Ethnicity/Race (n=88)		
Black	24	27
White	18	20
African, East African	9	10
Canadian	4	5
Mixed	4	5
Hispanic, Latinx	3	3
Jamaican	3	3
Somalis	3	3
South Asian	3	3
Chinese	2	2
Filipino	2	2
Guyanese	2	2
Spanish	2	2
Arab	1	1
Caribbean	1	1
East Asian	1	1
French	1	1
Jewish	1	1
Middle Eastern	1	1
Mongolian	1	1
Portuguese	1	1
West Indian	1	1

Nation of Origin (n=90)		
Canada	45	50
Jamaica	4	4
Ethiopia	3	3
Guyana	3	3
Nigeria	3	3
Pakistan	3	3
Caribbean	2	2
Ghana	2	2
Spain	2	2
Africa	1	1
Algeria	1	1
Antigua & Barbuda	1	1
Australia	1	1
Burundi	1	1
Congo	1	1
Costa Rica	1	1
England	1	1
Ethiopia	1	1
Europe	1	1
Gambia	1	1
Ghana	1	1
Guatemala	1	1
Haiti	1	1
Ingushetia	1	1
Libya	1	1
South Africa	1	1
St. Vincent	1	1
Sweden	1	1
Trinidad & Tobago	1	1
Uganda	1	1
Venezuela	1	1

COMMUNITY/NEIGHBOURHOOD BEFORE EVA'S

Respondents were asked an open-ended question about what community or neighbourhood they lived in before coming to Eva's (n=71). Responses were grouped together into Toronto's larger city neighbourhoods based on mapping from Tourism Toronto (Tourism Toronto, 2018) and Your Guide to Toronto Neighbourhoods (Dunkelman, 1997).

- ◆ Most respondents reported residing in the North York area (14).
- ◆ Nine reported coming from other shelters (e.g. Covenant House, Bellwoods Parkhouse, Youth Without Shelter, Turning Point, Kennedy House, and Horizons for Youth).
- ◆ Eight respondents lived in Toronto's city centre with the general boundaries of Spadina Avenue, Jarvis Street, Bloor Street, and Gardiner Expressway (Tourism Toronto, 2018).



REFUGEE STATUS

Eleven respondents identified coming to Canada as refugees, and nine of them faced homelessness one to three times so far. Seven respondents answered “no” or “I don’t know” to the question about refugee status and identified themselves as permanent residents, sponsored persons, and international students.

3.2 HOUSING TROUBLES

Respondents were asked about their past housing troubles (e.g. couch surfing, sleeping on the street, going to a shelter).

- ◆ The majority had experienced housing troubles one to three times in the past (56%).
- ◆ Twelve percent identified experiencing housing four to six times; 13% identified seven to 10 times; and 15% identified 11 or more times.

People aged 15 and over were significantly more likely to have faced housing troubles in the past, namely:

- ◆ 46% of those aged 19 or over;
- ◆ 46% of those aged 15 to 18; and
- ◆ 5% of those aged 11 to 14.

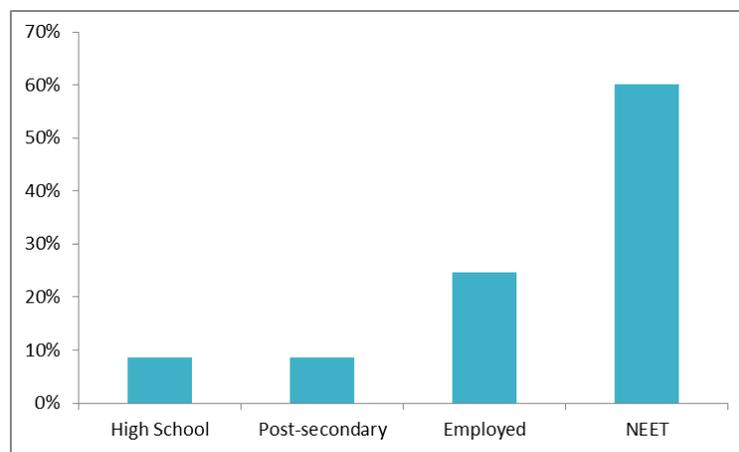
Participants aged 15 or older were also most likely to report multiple episodes of homelessness (44% of those 19 and over and 42% of those between 15 and 18).

Some respondents provided additional information. The child protection system, substance use, parental issues, and the costs of housing were identified by nine respondents as causes of their housing instabilities. Examples include:

- 📌 “My dad [didn’t] have money to pay for [our] house.”
- 📌 “I left home so my sister [could] take my room. I [also] had issues with my step-mom.”
- 📌 “I got involved with bad influences [that] got me hooked on drugs.”
- 📌 “I left [home] and had no ID so I did odd under-the-table jobs.”

3.3 EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

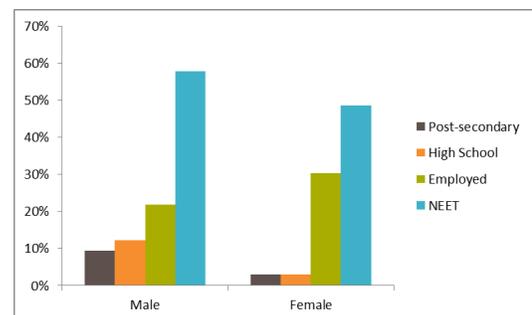
Respondents were asked about their education and employment. In line with Statistics Canada (2018) definitions, those who reported not being in school, training, or in the labour force are “not in employment, education or training” or “NEET”. “Unemployed” respondents are not employed but are looking for work. Of the 93 people who responded to this question, a significant number were NEET (60%), while only 25% reported being employed. Three reported being employed and in school. A comparative of responses are detailed below.



There are significant differences in gender breakdown of NEET rates. As shown in the chart to the right, female-identified respondents had a lower NEET rate at 48% while the NEET rate for male respondents was 58%. (Percentages do not add up to 100 because some respondents chose not to disclose gender.)

When looking at employment and demographics:

- 📌 Racialized respondents were less likely than white respondents to report being employed (22% vs. 28%).
- 📌 Only 3 LGBTQ2S+ youth indicated being employed vs. 16 straight youth.
- 📌 Of the 25% of young people who indicated being employed, 13 identified as male and 10 identified as female.



The survey also included a question about significant caregiver access to education. Of 92 respondents, 50 (54%) indicated that their significant caregivers such as parents and guardians only completed high school.

3.4 ABILITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH

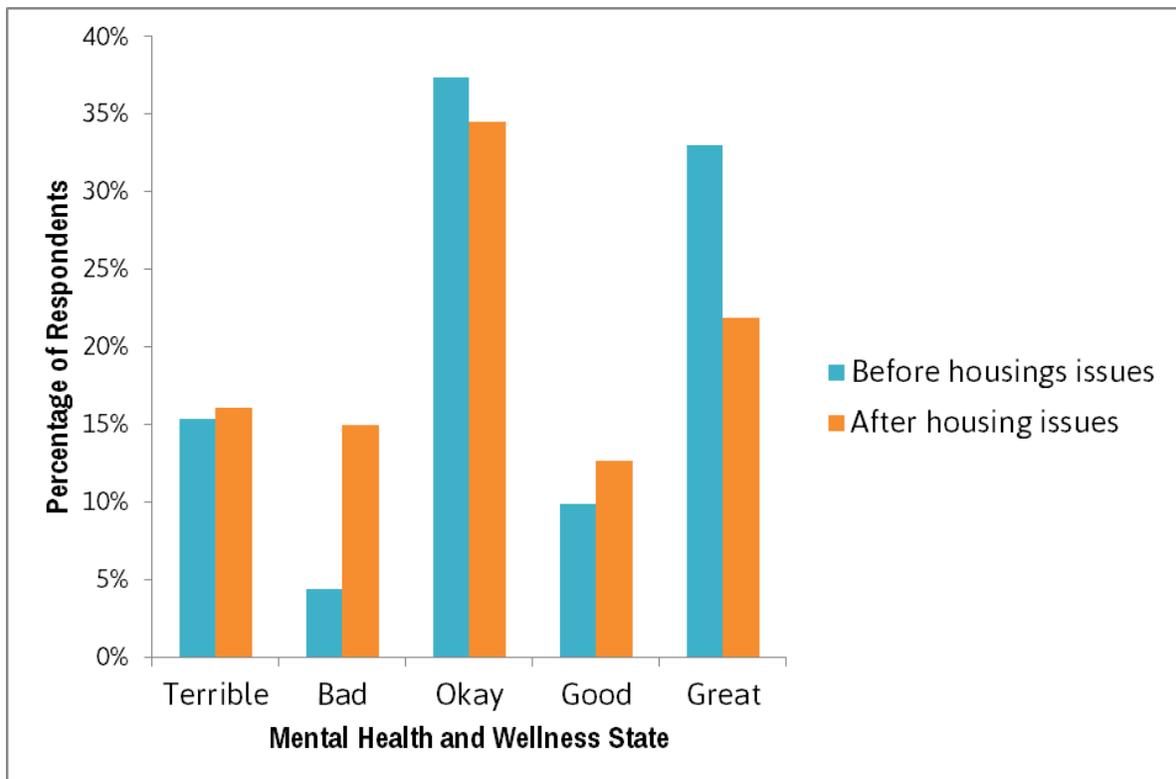
Respondents were asked about diagnoses or being told they had a physical disability, learning disability, and/or mental health issue, as well as using substances to cope with stress. Of 67 respondents:

- 15% identified a physical health diagnosis/issue
- 31% identified a learning disability diagnosis/issue
- 49% identified a mental health diagnosis/issue
- 72% identified using drugs or alcohol to cope with stress

Key findings include the following.

- Of the 21 respondents who reported a learning disability, 48% also reported not being in school.
- Respondents who first experienced homelessness between the ages of 15 and 18 reported the highest use of drugs or alcohol to cope with stress (65%).
- Of the 33 respondents who indicated having a mental health issue/diagnosis, 72% also reported using drugs or alcohol to cope with stress.

Respondents were also asked to rate their mental health before and after having housing trouble on a scale from 1 (“terrible”) to 5 (“great”). Results show a general decline in mental health and wellness after experiencing housing problems.



After experiencing housing issues, there was an 11% increase in respondents who ranked their mental health as “bad” and an 11% decrease in respondents who ranked their mental health as “great”. When analyzing data based on some key demographics:

- Women-identified respondents had the highest rate of being told they had mental health diagnosis or issue (40% vs. 29% male). They were also at greater risk of declining mental health after experiencing homelessness, with 6% reporting “bad” mental health before homelessness (vs. 3% men-identified) and 18% reporting “bad” mental health after experiencing homelessness (vs. 11% men-identified).
- Racialized youth reported less diagnoses of or being told they have a mental health issue (27% vs. 55% white youth).
- Of the LGBTQ2S+ respondents, 7 reported being diagnosed with or being told they had a mental health issue (vs. 22 straight youth).

3.5 SYSTEMS

CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Participants were asked about their experience with child protection and legal systems. Of the respondents who answered this question (n=92), 34% noted some involvement with child protection systems. Four respondents indicated having a Children’s Aid Society worker who intervened due to conflicts at home. Respondents who identified as members of majority racialized communities were more likely to report child protection involvement (41%) compared to white-identifying respondents (22%). All five respondents who reported leaving home before the age of 16 also reported some involvement with child protection (16%). Respondents who left home for the first time after age 15 were more likely to report child protection involvement (81%).

LEGAL SYSTEM

Respondents were asked, “Has the justice/legal system ever been in your life?”, and they were able to choose to elaborate on their “yes”, “no”, and “I don’t know” answers. Of the 96 respondents who answered the question, 39% identified involvement with the system. Three noted they had been arrested, one noted they had been in detention, and three identified being in court.

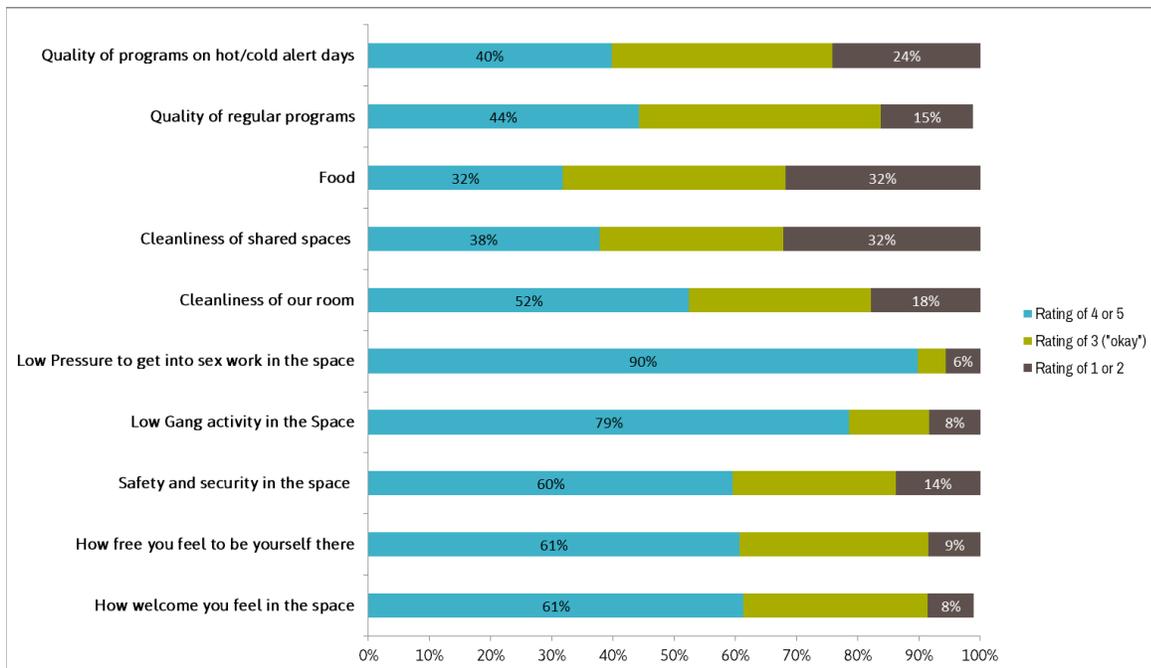
Respondents who were unemployed were more likely to have involvement with the legal system (49%, n=37, p = 0.14). Participants who were not in school were also more likely to report being involved with the legal system (41%, n=37, p=0.17) compared to participants who reported being in school (11%, n=37, p=0.17). Finally, youth who left home between the ages of 15 and 18 were more likely to report involvement with the legal system (51%).

3.6 EXPERIENCE AT EVA’S

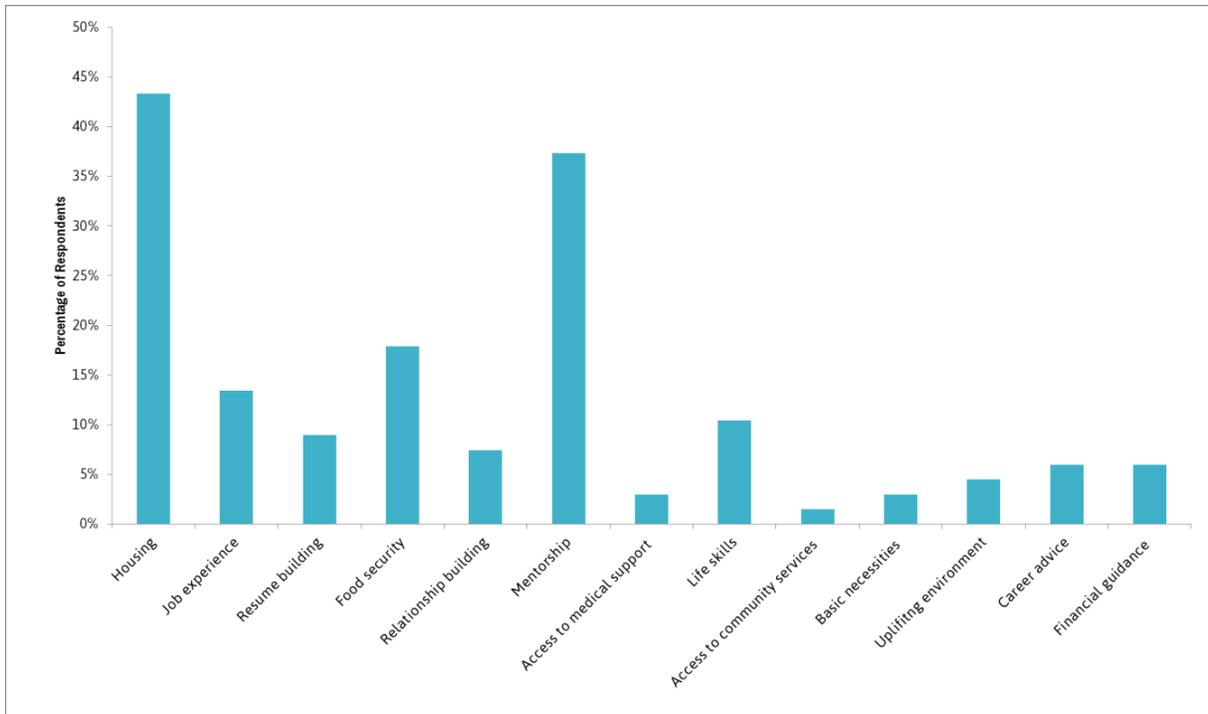
Participants evaluated their experience at Eva’s through four questions. They rated their overall experience with Eva’s on a scale of one (“terrible”) to five (“amazing”) and 10 respondents provided further comments. Of the 90 people who answered the question:

- six gave a rating of one (“terrible”) or two;
- 27 gave a rating of three (“okay”); and
- 57 gave a rating of four or five (“amazing”).

Participants were also asked to rate 10 aspects of being at Eva’s on a scale of one (“low”) to five (“high”). In general, about 60% of respondents indicated they felt welcome, safe, and free to be themselves. A majority of participants said that Eva’s facilities had low gang activity and pressures to enter into sex work (90% and 79%, respectively). Ratings around cleanliness of shared spaces and food were split.



Respondents reflected on how Eva’s improved their life through an open response question. Responses were grouped by theme and the top three centred on housing supports, mentorship, and food security. Complete results are summarized below.



HOUSING

Responses were grouped under the “housing” theme if they related to transitional housing, finding independent housing, or emergency shelter.

- 📌 “[Eva’s provided] a bed and a meal and a nice warm place to stay away from [the] cold weather.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s provided] a safe place to stay with a lot less to worry about.”
- 📌 “My case worker was the most helpful [support]. She made sure I got everything with [finding] my house done.”
- 📌 “Eva’s gave me a roof over my head when I really needed it the most.”

JOB EXPERIENCE

Responses were categorized under “job experience” if they related to job training, finding employment, Eva’s Print Shop Program, or skill-building related to the job sector.

- 📌 “The Eva’s Print Shop program is really what gave me a routine to follow and gave me the experience necessary to find a job in a field I love.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s provided] hands on training for [many] career pathways.”
- 📌 “[I] developed my skills in design and also got a job.”
- 📌 “I [learned] the names of tools and how to do drywall.”

RESUME BUILDING & CAREER ADVICE

Ten respondents indicated that Eva’s had improved their lives through “good resume building and career advice.”

- 📌 “[Eva’s] helped me establish my first resume.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s] helped with job placement and [my] resume.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s provided] job interview advice and helped [me] regain my confidence.”

FOOD SECURITY

Multiple respondents reported being appreciative of the warm meals Eva’s shelters provide.

- 📌 “[Eva’s] provides a warm environment and warm food.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s provides] somewhere to stay and food while going to [my] part time job.”

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING & UPLIFTING ENVIRONMENT

Some respondents expressed that Eva’s is a hub for them to socialize with other young people with similar experiences. Some noted that Eva’s shelters were a “positive environment” and safe space.

- 📌 “[I] learned how to work in a team, communicate and I [met] new people.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s] put me in a social environment.”
- 📌 “They gave me hope and motivation to [want] to improve myself.”

BASIC NECESSITIES

Two respondents noted that Eva’s provided necessities such as “clothing and hygiene products.”

MENTORSHIP AND SUPPORT

Mentorship and support by Eva’s team was mentioned by 37% of respondents. Young people expressed feeling supported and cared for and some addressed the guidance they received and how it motivated them.

- 📌 “They are very caring and supportive at the shelters.”
- 📌 “[The] workers show they really care and they give me a lot of support.”
- 📌 “Workers want to see you thrive to your best ability.”
- 📌 [Eva’s provides] social support and mentorship.”

ACCESS TO MEDICAL SUPPORT & COMMUNITY SERVICES

Two respondents indicated that Eva’s had improved their access to mental health supports and connections to community services.

LIFE SKILLS & FINANCIAL GUIDANCE

Eleven participants commented on the life lessons and skills they learned at Eva’s and how staff prepared them for a future beyond shelter/transitional housing environments.

- 📌 “[I learned] moral life lessons.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s taught] me the essentials to grow as an individual.”
- 📌 “[Eva’s] helped me to become an adult.”
- 📌 “I learned how to be smarter with managing money”

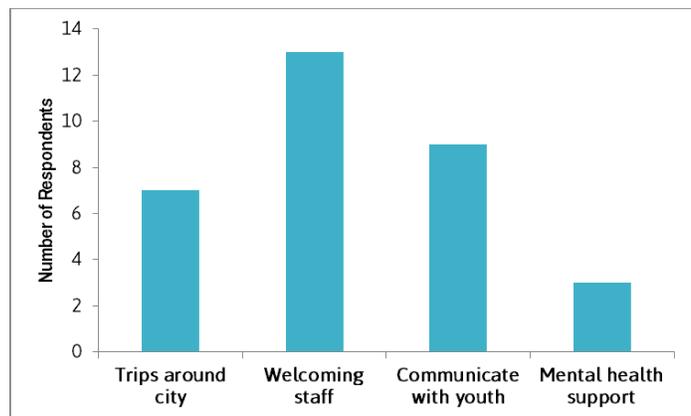
3.7 HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were asked about supports they need that Eva’s is not providing through an open response question where answers were grouped by theme. Of those who responded, 25% commented on a need for more support in finding permanent housing.

Respondents were asked how Eva’s can better to help young people get and keep housing, and respondents were able to check some options and add their own ideas. A breakdown of the selected options is detailed to the right.

Other ideas offered by respondents to help youth find and keep housing include the following:

- 📌 “Create an early prevention program through curriculum in school facilities.”
- 📌 “Eva’s could have more programs for youth to keep them out of the streets and programs that could keep them away from trouble or just to keep them focused on their future goals.”
- 📌 “It’s hard for us to get housing because a lot of people ask for a credit score. Help us get ID’s so we can open bank accounts.”
- 📌 “Create incentives or rewards for advancement and/or accomplishing goals.”
- 📌 “Promote phenomenal work ethic and make the youths dream big enough for them to want better than the shelter.”



3.8 OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were also asked, “How can Eva’s help youth feel like they truly belong in this city and in their communities?” A breakdown of common response themes are detailed below.

OUTINGS

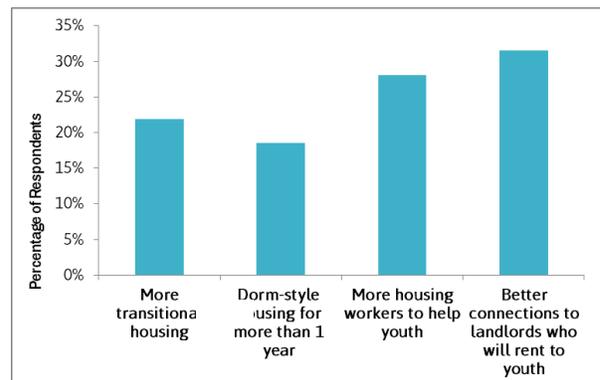
Multiple respondents indicated that trips around the city would help them connect to their community and give youth opportunities to get outside of the facilities.

- 📌 “Plan fun activities like going to archery.”
- 📌 “[Organize] more outings to local activities.”

Three respondents indicated they would benefit from provision of more public transit fare.

WELCOMING SPACE

Thirteen participants noted that Eva’s employees should strive to make facilities more welcoming, open, and respectful for young people.



- 👉 “Make sure youth feel welcomed at all times. Workers should always have a good attitude.”
- 👉 “Make us feel comfortable for who we are regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation. We are all part of the community.”

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUTH

Respondents addressed the need to engage young people when developing activities and programs, using feedback from young people to determine what will work.

- 👉 “Talk to youth [about] what they want to do. Don’t force baseball games on us all the time.”
- 👉 “Figure out what makes youth excited about life and what fulfills them so there can be a plan of pursuit.”
- 👉 “Connect with the youth more.”
- 👉 “Take time to get to actually know what youth need and help them to get whatever they need.”

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Respondents spoke to the mental health needs of the youth. One participant shared that Eva’s employees should “remind youth to love themselves.”

3.8 OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

Respondents were asked, “What else can Eva’s do to be a better place for youth?” A breakdown of common response themes are detailed below.

MORE PROGRAMMING

Some would like expanded programs and workshops. Four emphasized the need for more mental health programs and others mentioned new programming around promoting safe spaces, relationship-building, bullying, financial stability, and anti-oppression. Two respondents emphasized the need for more programs centered on legal aid. Others mentioned themes like immigration aid, trips around the city, nutritional health, and financial stability. For example:

- 👉 “Include more programs for mental health.”
- 👉 “[Provide] YMCA or gym passes and organize more things to do to pass time.”
- 👉 “Eva’s could probably have more group discussions about bullying so all youth can live in a positive space.”
- 👉 “Dynamic group activities where the focus is to connect with one another.”
- 👉 “[Implement] therapists, psychiatrists, doctors, harm reduction workers and legal workers.”

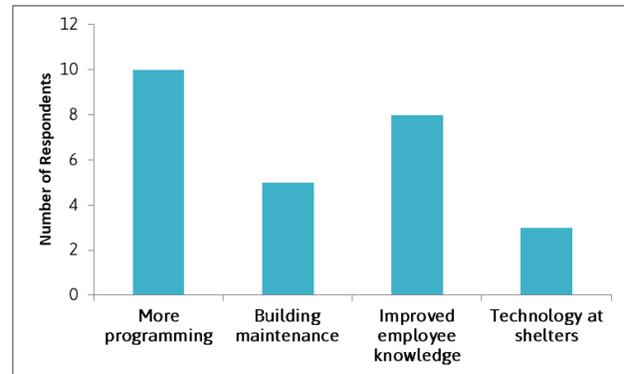
Some respondents addressed a need for stronger counselling supports to follow their progress in finding employment and housing. They commented on the need for a more personal approach that addresses specific concerns such as substance use and mental health.

- 👉 “I want Eva’s to help me out with housing. I didn’t have time to look for a place while I was in school so I had to hold off until I finished first year.”
- 👉 “There is no housing counselor. If the [shelters] had one I would have been gone by now. I need more help and support with finding a place I can call home.”

- ◆ “[Provide] assistance with [getting] housing documents.”
- ◆ “When I was in the shelters, I was automatically labeled a lost cause. Therefore I was not given the same support as other people living there.”

BUILDING MAINTENANCE & TECHNOLOGY

Three respondents indicated the need for cleaner washrooms, showers, and communal spaces. Some noted the need for better accessible technology at facilities.



IMPROVED EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE

Some noted a need for improved training for current and new employees that reiterates confidentiality, respect, and knowledge of what young people go through. For example:

- ◆ “Staff should not talk to youth about youth who have moved out or share personal information.”
- ◆ “Make sure all staff is on the same page.”
- ◆ “Talk with the youth one-on-one to see what they need.”
- ◆ “Staff does not know how to help or [have] the right information.”
- ◆ “There is a lack of guidance or sense of direction from some of the social workers.”

LIMITATIONS

- ◆ The sample was limited to people who agreed to fill out the survey during a specific timeframe. As such, respondents were highly self-selected and the sample may have excluded key people (e.g. residents who were under-engaged or dissatisfied in their experience at Eva’s).
- ◆ The survey used many open-ended responses, including questions about identities/communities. While open-ended questions allow people to be freer in identifying themselves, they can be more difficult to analyze and can create ambiguities in the analysis.
- ◆ No respondents identified as part of some key groups who are known to be overrepresented amongst youth experiencing homelessness. This includes Indigenous young people and trans, two-spirit, and non-binary young people. This may be due to the backgrounds/makeup of people served at Eva’s at the time, or it could be due to people not feeling safe enough to reveal their identities/community relations in full.
- ◆ Non-response rates for questions increased towards the end of the survey, likely due to survey fatigue.

LEARNINGS AND FURTHER QUESTIONS

- ◆ An ongoing survey supplied to every young person at Eva’s will ensure a more accurate and representative analysis of who the organization serves.

- The survey did not ask detailed questions about why respondents had experienced homelessness. More detailed survey questions and opportunities for responses will help us understand homelessness/housing precarity precursors and how to prevent them.
- Improved permanent housing options and supports were highlighted as a core need, as well better space and facility maintenance within Eva’s existing buildings. With new resources and staffing the organization is putting toward facility maintenance and increased housing options for young people, improvements in ratings and feedback from young people should be reflected in future surveys.

EVA’S INITIATIVES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Administrative Office: 425 Adelaide Street West, Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario, M5V 3C1
Phone 416-977-4497 | Email info@evas.ca | Website www.evas.ca

   Connect with us @evasinitiatives

APPENDIX: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Q1. How are/were you involved with Eva's? (Check all that apply)

- I was a resident
- I am a resident
- I was part of a program
- I am a part of a program

Q2. When did you come to Eva's? Give the closest date you can remember.

Q3. Which facilities are/were you involved in? (Check all that apply)

- Eva's Place
- Eva's Satellite
- Eva's Phoenix

Q4. What is your current age?

Q5. Tell us about your communities/identities:

- Your gender
- Your ethnicity/race
- Your country/nation of origin
- Your sexual orientation/sexuality
- Year you came to Canada, if applicable
- Your religion/fait h/spirituality

Q6. What community/neighbourhood did you live in before coming to Eva's?

Q7. Did you come to Canada as a refugee?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Q8. What age were you when you first became homeless or started having housing trouble?

- 0-8
- 8-10
- 11-14
- 15-18
- 19+

Q9. How many times have you had housing trouble so far? (Including couch surfing, sleeping on the street, having to go to a shelter, etc.)

- 1-3 times
- 4-6 times

- 👉 7-10 times
- 👉 11+ times

Q10. Rate your mental health and wellness (Scale of 1 to 5).

Q11. Check all that apply to you:

- 👉 I've had a physical disability diagnosis or been told I have a physical disability
- 👉 I've had a learning disability diagnosis or been told I have a learning disability
- 👉 I've had a mental health diagnosis or been told I have a mental health issue
- 👉 I've used drugs or alcohol to cope with stress

Q12. Has Children's Aid ever been in your life (e.g. lived in foster care, had a CAS worker, was adopted)?

- 👉 Yes
- 👉 No
- 👉 I don't know

Q13. Has the justice/legal system ever been in your life (e.g. got arrested, went to court, did detention or jail)?

- 👉 Yes
- 👉 No
- 👉 I don't know

Q14. Tell us about the financial situation of your home before you came to Eva's. How tight was money? (Scale of 1 to 5)

Q15. Tell us about the education your parents/caregivers/guardians were able to get. Check all that apply.

- 👉 Less than high school
- 👉 Finished high school
- 👉 Finished university/college
- 👉 I don't know

Q16. Tell us about school and/or work. Check all that apply.

- 👉 I'm in high school
- 👉 I'm in college or university
- 👉 I'm not in school right now but I want to go
- 👉 I have a job
- 👉 I don't have a job right now but I want to get one

Q17. Rate your experience with Eva's overall. (Scale of 1 to 5)

Q18. What kind of help does/did Eva's give you that makes your life better?

Q19. What help did you not get/are you not getting from Eva's that you need?

Q20. Rate the following about Eva's facilities/spaces.

- 📌 How welcome you feel in the space
- 📌 How free you feel to be yourself there
- 📌 Safety and security in the space
- 📌 Gang activity in the space
- 📌 Pressure to get into sex work in the space
- 📌 Cleanliness of your room
- 📌 Cleanliness of shared spaces (e.g. lounge areas)
- 📌 Food
- 📌 Quality of regular programs
- 📌 Quality of programs on hot/cold alert days

Q21. How can Eva's help youth not have to come to shelters in the first place?

Q22. How can we make sure youth stay at Eva's for the shortest time possible or don't stay longer than necessary?

Q23. What can Eva's do to help youth get and keep housing? (Check all that apply)

- 📌 More Eva's Phoenix-style transitional housing
- 📌 Dorm-style housing to live in for more than 1 year
- 📌 More housing workers to help youth
- 📌 Make better connections with good landlords who will rent to youth

Q24. How can Eva's help youth feel like they truly belong in this city and in their communities?

Q25. What else can Eva's do to be a better place for youth?

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