

Community Benefits of Supportive Housing

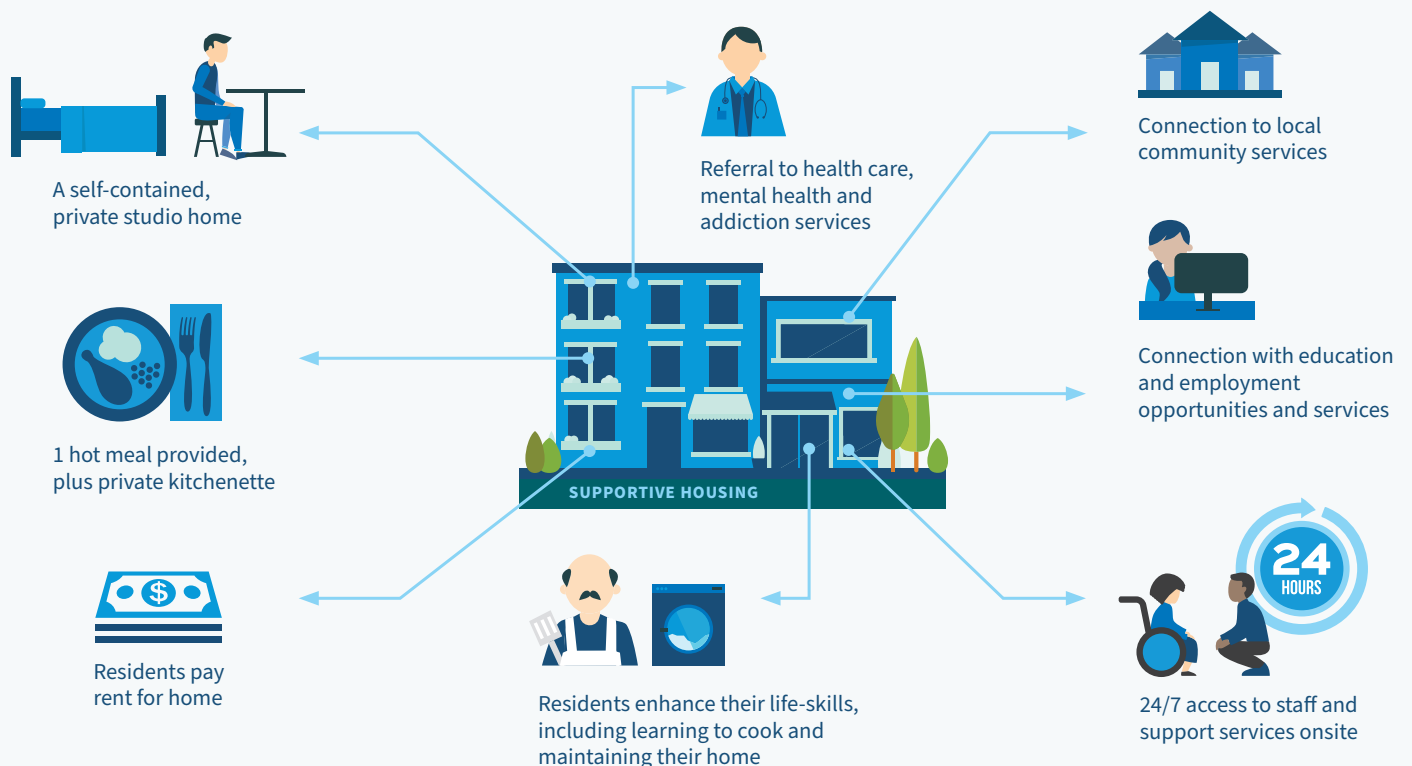
This resource answers questions about Supportive Housing in your neighbourhood



What is supportive housing?

Provincially-funded supportive housing is for people experiencing homelessness. Supportive housing provides a home with access to on-site supports to ensure people can achieve and maintain housing stability. Residents have access to their own self-contained studio apartment or, in some cases, a secure unit with shared bathroom and amenity spaces. All residents sign either a program or tenancy agreement and participate in programming based on an individualized case plan.

All residents in supportive housing have made a choice to live there and are able to access the services provided by non-profit housing operators, such as life-skills training, and connections to primary health care, mental health and/or substance use services.





Will supportive housing affect property values in my neighbourhood?



Studies show that property values immediately surrounding supportive housing sites typically keep pace with the trends of the surrounding municipality.



Facts and Statistics



- ➔ Research completed in 2019 of 13 B.C. supportive housing sites showed that property values immediately surrounding 10 sites either kept pace or surpassed surrounding municipal trends. Property values for the other three sites were not notably different compared to municipal trends.
- ➔ A study in New York City of 7,500 supportive housing units from 1974 to 2005 found no evidence of a negative impact on property values close to supportive housing.

Sources:

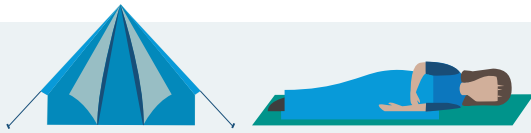
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Is supportive housing costly for tax-payers?



Studies show the cost of providing supportive housing is less than the cost of providing the health and public safety services needed to address homelessness.



VS



On average, a person **experiencing homelessness** with addictions and/or mental illness used **\$55,000** per year in health care and/or corrections services

On average, a person **in supportive housing** with addictions and/or mental illness used **\$37,000** per year in health care and/or corrections services

Supportive housing residents were **64% less likely** than shelter clients **to use ambulance services**



Average hospital stay for supportive housing residents was **50% less** than shelter clients



Facts and Statistics

- A 2008 B.C. study found that on average a person experiencing homelessness with addictions and/or mental illness used \$55,000 per year in health care and/or corrections services compared to \$37,000 for a person in supportive housing.
- A 2019 B.C. study linking data for more than 450 individuals in BC Housing-funded supportive housing and emergency shelters found:
 - Supportive housing residents were 64 per cent less likely than emergency shelter clients to use ambulance services.
 - The average hospital stay for supportive housing residents was 50 per cent less than for emergency shelter clients.

Sources:

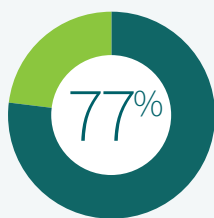
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- Malatest & Associates Ltd. 2019. *Supportive Housing Outcome Evaluation*. BC Housing (Underway).



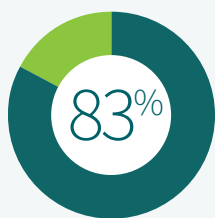
Will supportive housing change my neighbourhood?



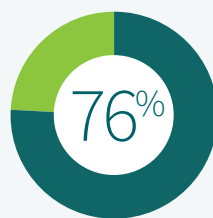
Many supportive housing residents have an existing connection with the neighbourhood and report experiencing positive interactions with neighbours after they moved in. Often the initial concerns from neighbourhoods about supportive housing decrease over time.



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **a prior connection** to the neighbourhood



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **positive interactions** with neighbours



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported having **friends or relatives** in the neighbourhood



Supportive housing staff and residents **care about safety and well-being** of their neighbourhoods



Facts and Statistics

- 77 per cent of survey respondents across modular supportive housing sites reported having a prior connection to the neighbourhood before moving into their modular housing unit.
- 83 per cent of survey respondents across modular supportive housing sites reported experiencing positive interactions with neighbours in the surrounding community since they moved in.
- 76 per cent of survey respondents across modular supportive housing sites reported having friends or relatives in the neighbourhood who they can talk to.
- Community Advisory Committees established when developing supportive housing sites often find they no longer need to meet once the sites become operational, as issues and concerns become infrequent. Awareness also increases amongst neighbours to contact the housing provider to address any issues or concerns that do arise.
- Supportive housing staff and residents care about the safety and well-being of their neighbourhoods and are active participants in revitalizing their communities.

Sources:

- BC Housing. 2021. *Modular Supportive Housing Resident Outcomes Study Reports*. www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/transition-from-homelessness/modular-supportive-housing-resident-outcomes?sortType=sortByDate
- Wolf, A. d. 2008. *We are Neighbours: The Impact of Supportive Housing on Community, Social, Economic and Attitude Changes*. Toronto: Wellesley Institute.
- BC Housing. 2018. *Community Acceptance Series – Supportive Housing Case Study Series: Overview*. www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/community-acceptance/bk-case-study-series-overview&sortType=sortByDate

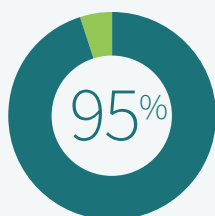


Does supportive housing work to reduce homelessness in my neighbourhood and community?

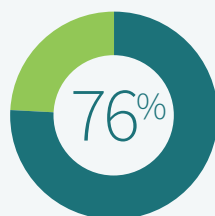


Supportive housing residents are no longer homeless after they are housed. Once in a supportive housing unit, people who previously experienced homelessness report improvements in access to employment, income, education, mental health supports and life-skills.

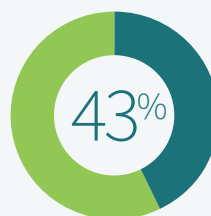
After Six Months:



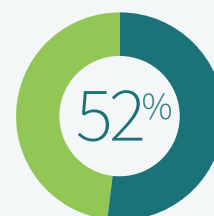
of supportive housing residents **remained housed**



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **improved overall well-being**



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **improved access to employment opportunities**



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **improvements in life skills**



Facts and Statistics

- 95 per cent of residents living in BC Housing-funded supportive housing in 2020-21 had been housed for at least six months, including 81 per cent who had been housed for at least one year.
- 76 per cent of survey respondents in modular supportive housing sites reported improvements to their overall well-being.
- 43 per cent of survey respondents in modular supportive housing sites reported improved access to employment opportunities and employment support services.
- 52 per cent of survey respondents in modular supportive housing sites reported improvements in life skills. Staff interviewed said residents life skills improve in terms of cooking, keeping their space tidy, and personal hygiene.

Sources:

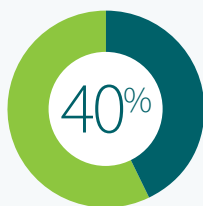
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- BC Housing. 2022. *Supportive Housing Demographics and Outcomes*.



Why does supportive housing allow residents to use addictive substances?



Supportive housing uses a harm reduction approach. “Harm reduction” is a term used to describe an array of strategies aimed at reducing potential harm to individuals and communities associated with substance use. Not everyone who moves into supportive housing has substance use issues.



of modular supportive housing survey respondents reported **improvements in substance use issues** six months after moving in.



Many supportive housing sites have volunteer programs for residents to **help keep the neighbourhoods clean.**

Facts and Statistics:

- In a study of residents living in BC Housing-funded modular supportive housing, 40 per cent reported improvements in substance use issues six months after moving in. 35 per cent reported that their substance use issues were the same (note: not all residents have substance use issues).
- Supportive housing providers use several strategies to reduce harm related to substance use. These include access to naloxone, peer involvement, supervised injection rooms, staff training and overdose protocols.
- Supportive housing can reduce substance use paraphernalia found in neighborhoods. For example, the Clean Team operated by a supportive housing provider in Vancouver, sweeps the neighbourhood, looking for substance use and other drug-related paraphernalia.
- Many supportive housing sites have volunteer programs for residents to help keep the neighbourhoods clean. This includes picking up garbage and substance use paraphernalia left by people who do not live in supportive housing.
- About half of residents in BC Housing-funded supportive housing reported having an substance use issue.

Sources:

- Homeless Hub. 2021, October. *Harm Reduction*. Retrieved from Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/substance-use-addiction/harm-reduction
- BC Housing. 2021. *Modular Supportive Housing Resident Outcomes Study Reports*. www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/transition-from-homelessness/modular-supportive-housing-resident-outcomes?sortType=sortByDate
- Urban Health Research Initiative. 2009. *Findings from the evaluation of Vancouver's Pilot Medically Supervised Safer Injecting Facility*. BC Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS.
- Cohen, E. 2019. *The Effects of Designated Homeless Housing Sites on Local Communities: Evidence from Los Angeles County*. Los Angeles: UCLA.
- BC Housing. 2018. *Community Acceptance Series – Supportive Housing Case Study Series: Overview*. www.bchousing.org/research-centre/library/community-acceptance/bk-case-study-series-overview&sortType=sortByDate

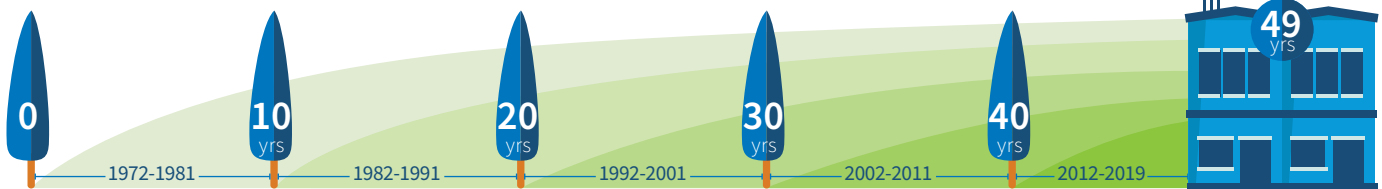


Will supportive housing have an impact on nearby schools in my neighbourhood?



Many supportive housing sites across the province have been operating in their communities and near schools for 10+ years with few issues and support from the community.

Oldest supportive housing site operating for **49** years



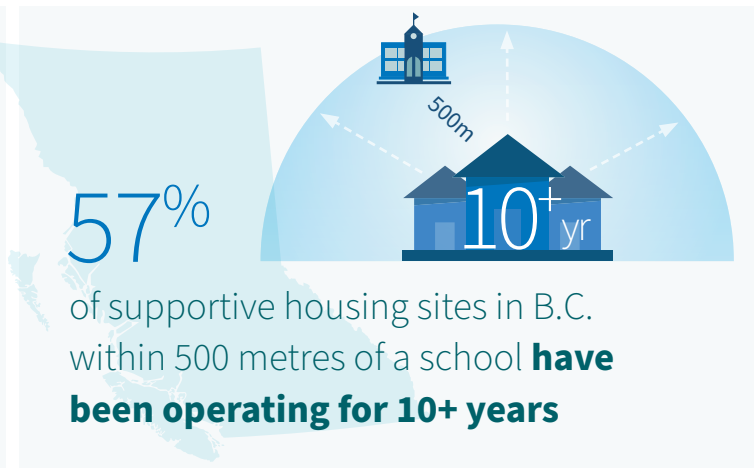
225+

provincially-funded sites operate **within 500 metres** of a school



57%

of supportive housing sites in B.C. within 500 metres of a school **have been operating for 10+ years**



Facts and Statistics

- The oldest supportive housing site in B.C. has been operating for 49 years.
- There are over 225 provincially-funded supportive housing sites across the province that are within 500 metres of a school.
- 57 per cent of provincially-funded supportive housing sites in B.C. within 500 metres of schools have been operating for 10+ years.



Sources:

• BC Housing, 2021. Central Property System.



How will supportive housing contribute to my neighbourhood's local economy?



Residents of supportive housing contribute to the economy of the neighborhoods they live in by spending money at local businesses. The construction and operation of supportive housing also creates local jobs.

Every dollar invested in supportive housing puts

\$4-5

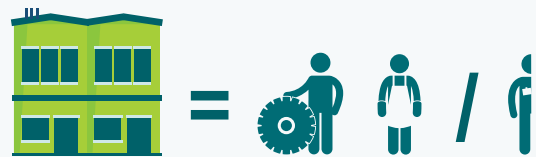
back into the local economy through social and/or economic activities



An Ontario study found for every new residential unit built, an estimated

2-2.5

new jobs are created



Facts and Statistics:

- 2018 B.C. studies showed that every dollar invested in supportive housing creates four to five dollars in social and/or economic value. Neighbourhood benefits include improved well-being and increased local spending.
- A 2008 study of two supportive housing buildings located in the same Toronto community found that the tenants' local economic footprint is modest because of tenants' income. This does, however, result in tenants shopping at local convenience stores, pharmacies, coffee shops and restaurants, contributing to the local economy of the neighborhood.
- An Ontario study found for every new residential unit built, an estimated 2 to 2.5 new jobs are created.

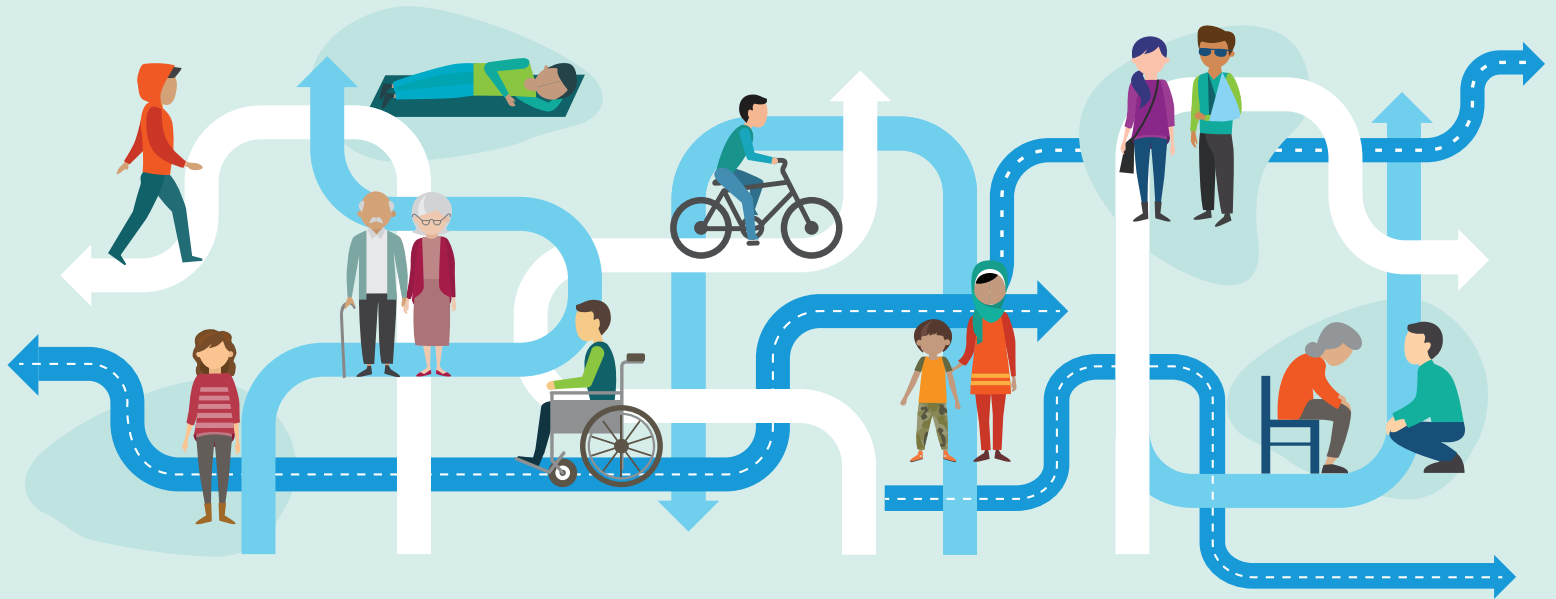
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Understanding Pathways

The information below provides a brief overview of pathways to homelessness. Often it is a combination of factors.



- ➔ Lack of affordable housing
- ➔ Discrimination based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability
- ➔ Discharge from hospitals and corrections
- ➔ Illness, injury, and job loss
- ➔ Gender-based violence
- ➔ Mental Health
- ➔ Poverty and wealth distribution
- ➔ Impact of colonization on Indigenous people
- ➔ Substance Use
- ➔ Floods, fires, and climate change
- ➔ Youth aging out of government care
- ➔ Barriers to Service

Sources:

- Gaetz, Stephen, Jesse Donaldson, Tim Richter and Tanya Gulliver. *The State of Homelessness In Canada 2013*. A Homeless Hub Research Paper. www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/SOHC2103.pdf

Works Cited

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