Education, Training & Employment

Inadequate income, employment and education are well-documented as contributing factors of people cycling in and out of homelessness. Solving these inadequacies would create possibilities of moving out of homelessness.

Developing education, training and employment (ETE) programs for people experiencing homelessness is different than doing so for the housed population, because of factors such as lack of a permanent address, inability to maintain proper hygiene or nutrition, challenges of following shelter rules while employment, physical or mental health and/or addictions issues. There is a need for skills-based training including job readiness skills and life skills training including money management and cooking/shopping.

Because the average education levels of people experiencing homelessness are lower than the general public, they may experience challenges with participating in the formal labour market. Programs to help improve the education levels of people experiencing homelessness need to recognize and accommodate these challenges. This is a similar situation for work programs and is one of the reasons why social enterprise programs, which focus more on community good than profit, are so successful in the homelessness sector.

**Youth experiencing homelessness** have their own unique set of challenges assessing income, education and employment -- the same can be said for single parents. Most programs for youth experiencing homelessness in Canada focus on skills development (getting them into the job market) rather than providing them with an opportunity to finish school. Families experiencing homelessness also experience challenges in getting adequate educational supports for their children.