

Young Parents No Fixed Address

is a network of Toronto organizations dedicated to building strong community partnerships to identify & address the challenges faced by young, street involved or homeless pregnant and parenting youth and their children.

Objectives:

- To build community capacity and collaboration.
- To advocate for a range of housing options and supports.
- To increase and enhance services for this vulnerable group.
- To improve communication, co-operation and co-ordination between agencies & services to best meet the needs of this population.
- To encourage the development of innovative solutions to meet the needs of young parents.
- To advocate jointly on behalf of young parents.
- To promote optimal outcomes for the children.
- To increase knowledge and awareness of issues affecting this group; sexuality, grief & loss, mental health, trauma, family conflict and systemic barriers.
- Using the gathered expertise of our members to create training and information resources to present to other service providers including lawyers, child welfare agencies, post-secondary students, other advocacy groups, politicians and policy makers.

Funding: We are grateful for the funding and support made available through the City of Toronto's – **Shelter, Support and Housing Administration: Housing Stability Policy and Strategic Investments.**

YPNFA Members

Children's Aid Society of Toronto
Catholic Children's Aid Society
Central Toronto Youth Services
College Montrose Children's Place
Covenant House
East Metro Youth Services
Evergreen Centre/Yonge St. Mission
Frontier College: Beat the Street
Hospital for Sick Children - Young Families Program
Humewood House
Jean Tweed Centre - Pathways to Healthy Families
Jessie's –the June Callwood Centre for Young Women
LAMP Community Health Centre
Massey Centre for Women
Mothercraft / Breaking the Cycle
Queen W-Parkdale CHC
Planned Parenthood of Toronto
Regent Park CHC
Rexdale CHC
Rosalie Hall
Rouge Valley Health System
Skylark Children, Youth & Families
St. Michael's Hospital - Women's Health Centre
Toronto Public Health: HARP, HBHC
Toronto Hostel Services:
Family Residence, Birkdale & Robertson House
University of Toronto, School of Nursing
Women's Habitat of Etobicoke
Women Moving Forward
Working Women's Community Centre-HIPPY
YMCA –YSAP Program
Yorktown Child & Family Centre
Youth Unlimited; Time Out for Young Moms
YWCA Girls & Family Centre

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**“WORKING TOGETHER TO HELP
YOUNG FAMILIES
SURVIVE & THRIVE.”**

WWW.YPNFA.COM

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Young Parents No Fixed Address was convened in 1997 to examine the increasing numbers of pregnant young women being seen by the agencies dealing with homeless youth in Toronto.

The inquest into the starvation death of a 5 week old baby born to a young homeless mother in 1997 made a number of recommendations which YPNFA has successfully worked to see implemented

Young Parents No Fixed Address (YPNFA) is currently a network of 35 agencies and organizations from across Toronto dedicated to building strong community partnerships to address the issues facing street involved or precariously housed pregnant and parenting youth and their children.

Our network has developed several innovative and responsive solutions to the issues faced by this population.

We continue to explore ways we can enhance the well being of these young families through collaboration and cooperation.

In addition to the projects highlighted here, YPNFA is also working on responses to the mental health and sexual health needs of young parents as well as the trauma, grief and loss they often face.

20 YEARS AGO A TRAGEDY.

20 YEARS LATER A LEGACY.

Why Housing & Shelter is So Important:

Without a safe and affordable place to live parenting is an almost insurmountable task. YPNFA believes that every family has the right to appropriate and affordable housing. A variety of housing solutions are necessary to meet the complex and changing needs of young families in Toronto.

Over the past 20 years YPNFA members have developed partnerships to ensure access to a range of housing options from shelters to transitional or permanent housing. Including those noted here.

1900 Sheppard Ave W. Through the supportive efforts of the YPNFA network, Humewood House Assoc. (416-651-5657) and in partnership with Toronto Community Housing we developed 1900 Sheppard Ave W. A transitional housing facility for 27 young moms and their children. **Email:** information.1900@rogers.com

Wraparound for Young Families:

In partnership with YPNFA, Skylark has received funding to provide Wraparound Services to precariously housed young parents. The Wraparound process helps young families in housing crisis identify and utilize a highly individualized, client selected network of support (families, friends, community and professionals).

Email: heather.ibbott@skylarkyouth.org

Babies Born to Under-Housed Mothers in Toronto: Dr. Joyce Bernstein (Toronto Public Health), in cooperation with this network, designed a surveillance system to track births to homeless young women in Toronto. Between January 2012 and the end of 2013 over 600 babies have been born to homeless mothers in Toronto.

Raising the Roof: National Child & Family Homelessness Initiative:

Our network was selected and played a major role in collaborating over a 3 year period with **Raising the Roof's - Child & Family Homelessness initiative** which aimed to address the alarming number of children and families experiencing homelessness in Canada through the creation and implementation of an integrated framework. This endeavor resulted in a 138 page report including a number of recommendations to stakeholders and policy makers.

Gulliver-Garcia, T. (2016). **Putting an End to Child & Family Homelessness in Canada.** Toronto: Raising the Roof

Our network recognizes that housing plays a huge role in enhancing Young Parents physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. At the same time, addressing emotional, physical and mental health issues also enhances a family's ability to obtain and maintain housing. As a result we have also focused on the following endeavors:

My Baby & Me Passport Program:

The passport is a portable health record and information booklet for young pregnant homeless or marginally housed women. The passport and incentive program (TTC fare, gift cards) was developed to improve maternal and child health outcomes and improve communication and coordination of patient care among health care providers. 94% of women in this award winning program delivered healthy and full term babies.

Parent Relief:

YPNFA and Jessie's -the June Callwood Centre for Young Women (416-365-1888) created a program that provides FREE overnight respite care for up to 5 nights to young parents under 25 years of age. Screened volunteers are provided with appropriate equipment and an honorarium to take children into their home and provide parents with a much needed break. The Parent Relief Program is now receiving core funding from the United Way.

Mobile Phone Based Peer Support to Prevent Postpartum Depression in Adolescent Mothers:

In collaboration with Principal Investigator: Barbara Chyzy (University of Toronto) this study aims to evaluate the feasibility and acceptability of an innovative mobile phone based peer to peer support for adolescent mothers with the intention of preventing PPD among this high vulnerable and complex maternal population. In this study, peer mentors (young mothers between 15-23 years) will be trained to provide support via mobile phone to a new adolescent mother during the last trimester of pregnancy and first 3 months postpartum.

Models of Care for Pregnant Youth in Toronto:

We are developing a Community of Practice, involving a number of community health agencies, and are seeking to identify current health care services, trends and existing barriers for pregnant and parenting adolescents and their children. We will then advocate for a standardized evidence-based adolescent focused model of care for pregnant and parenting youth in Toronto.