CAMPOUT

TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER #1

NOVEMBER 1ST - 4TH, 2021

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OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER

THANK YOU FOR CAMPING OUT THIS YEAR!

Thank you for reading our first ever A Way Home Kamloops newsletter! We are excited to be able to share relevant announcements, news, or updates pertaining to our 5th annual Campout to End Youth Homelessness with you all through this weekly newsletter. You can expect to get latest tips & tricks, hear from youth with lived expertise, tutorials on how to set-up your Canada Helps fundraising page, and get access to all sorts of Campout materials to help you in your fundraising efforts!

WHAT IS CAMPOUT?

HISTORY OF CAMPOUT TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Campout to End Youth Homelessness is A Way Home Kamloops' annual fundraiser where Campers sleep outside in cardboard boxes on a mid-December night to raise awareness on youth homelessness in the community. This event was cofounded in 2017 by Katherine McParland, the late founder/Executive Director of A Way Home Kamloops and Rocky Hunter, the former franchise owner of the Kamloops Domino's.

The event's original goal was to fundraise for our Safe Suites program, which opened in 2019 as a result of Campout. Safe Suites currently provides 6 beds to at-risk youth with 24/7 wraparound staff support. This year, the funds raised will go towards continuing our Youth Housing First program (including Safe Suites) with some being put into reserve for programming in our newest project, Katherine's Place. Katherine's Place will provide 39 units of 24/7 staff housing, wraparound services including employment, education, and life skills training, and connection to community supports.

(picture: Katherine's Place Building Concept)

KATHERINE MCPARLAND

A CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Katherine McParland was the Founder and first Executive Director of A Way Home Kamloops Society. Being a former youth in care and having extensive lived expertise, she was a fearless leader in the field of social work and youth homelessness advocacy. She utilized her expertise to make meaningful change from the local to national level, having co-founded the BC Coalition to End Youth Homelessness, been appointed to the BC Housing Board of Commissioners and the National Advisory Committee on Homelessness. The path Katherine paved through her leadership with A Way Home Kamloops sparked an international movement, with the name “A Way Home” being adopted for A Way Home Canada, America, and even Scotland! In her lifetime, she received the YMCA Peace Medal and the BC Association of Social Workers Heart of the Grasslands Award. In February 2020, Katherine released her report, “From Marginalized To Magnified”, through the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

Katherine’s legacy lives on in the hearts of every person who had the opportunity to hear her story or see her dedication and drive in action. This legacy continues to advocate for youth growing through the cracks and building a life after being at-risk of or experiencing homelessness. In memoriam, Katherine has been awarded the First Call Champion of Children & Youth Rights Award, the AIMCanada Lifetime Mentorship Award for Youth Homelessness Advocacy, and there is an upcoming announcement at the BC Non-Profit Housing Association and BC Housing’s Housing Central Conference in 2 weeks.

REGISTER OR DONATE

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

TYPES OF YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Youth homelessness can exist beyond a young person being visibly homeless on the streets.

Watch Campout Committee member, Nicholas Adams, in this short video describing just some of the many ways youth homelessness exists. Click the image to watch!

YOUTH HAVE A VOICE!

WORDS FROM A YOUTH WITH LIVED EXPERTISE

INSERT YOUTH TESTIMONY HERE.

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To stay up-to-date on our work, follow us on social media below (click the icons).

You can also catch us WEEKLY on RadioNL on Thursday afternoons and find our donation boxes at supporting businesses!

A Way Home Kamloops

Thank you for reading!

CAMPOUT

TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER #2

CAMPOUT 2019

NOVEMBER 8TH - 12TH, 2021

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NEWS & UPDATES

ONLY 4 WEEKS AWAY FROM CAMPOUT!!

We are just one month out from December 10th and have surpassed the 1/10th mark of our $250,000 goal this week!!

So far, a total of 23 Campers have registered!

We are hoping to have around 80 Campers this year, and encourage you to invite your friends, co-workers, and family to join in on the event! As youth homelessness is often hidden in nature, such as through couch surfing, Campers with diverse abilities or young children are invited to make their camps in their living rooms! There is no wrong way to Campout!

We are also excited to announce for any roleplaying lovers that we will be bringing back D&D for the night of Campout, hosted by Dungeon Master extraordinaire Tyler Carpentier! More details to come in the next couple of weeks.

Our Campout Committee will be presenting next Tuesday to City Council, inviting them to join in the cause in ending youth homelessness by Camping out with us! In the past, the City of Kamloops has made proclamations for Campout To End Youth Homelessness Week.

On page 3, you can download our Facebook Cover Photo that you can use to let people know you are camping out this year. You can also find there an pre-built social media post that you can use to help spread the word visually!

As we get closer to Campout, you'll have an chance to hear from previous and current Campers on their experiences of sleeping outside. This week, we have Leann Koptyko sharing some of her special memories from Campouts previous.

Lastly, we are happy to share that in our next issue, we will be providing Camper a tutorial on how best to set-up their Canada Helps pages to maximize your fundraising efforts! We hope you will look forward to our tips and tricks next week as well.

"Our most horrific life experiences that cause the deepest wounds can sometimes become our life purpose."

- Katherine McFarland

To the right is a pre-built social media post that you can use to tell people that you are Camping out this year!

You can also download our Facebook Cover Photo to add to your profile.

Click the image to download it!

I am Camping out!!

I sleeping outside on December 10th in a cardboard box to raise awareness on youth homelessness as a part of A Way Home Kamloops' annual Campout.

Every winter many youth go without shelter, food, or only the clothes on their backs in Kamloops. Help me make a difference by supporting my pledge in ending youth homelessness!

#Campout2021
#CampoutToEndYouthHomelessness
#KatherinesPlace

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMPOUT

Not sure what to prepare for Campout?

Watch Campout Committee member, Nicholas Adams, share his tips for the best items to bring with you when camping outside!

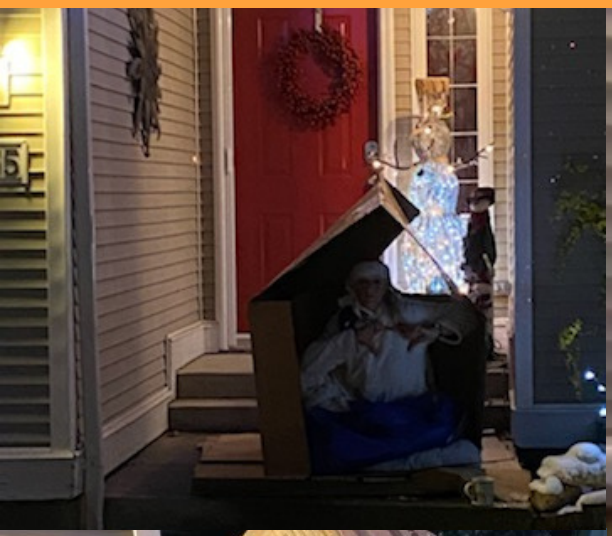
Click the image on the right to watch!

REGISTER OR DONATE

YOUTH HAVE A VOICE!

WORDS FROM A YOUTH WITH LIVED EXPERTISE

"Throughout my life, I experienced homelessness. It kinda just felt like a reality I couldn't escape, no matter what I did. I wanted to go back to school and be the first person in my family to get a university degree... but it wasn't something I could really imagine happening. I met Katherine through A Way Home Kamloops and was given the support I needed to feel safe and with a home. I didn't have to worry about rent because I was given support to get on assistance and had my housing subsidized in their housing program. I got stable and now I'm in school working towards my Bachelor's degree! It's unreal. I'm happy to have had the support of A Way Home to get here."



CAMPOUT MEMORIES

LOOKING BACK AT THE YEARS

"One of my original Campout memories was the first year in 2017. I didn't stay out, but I stopped at the Northshore area at the Domino's. There was a drive-thru for pizza pick-up, where the parking lot was transformed into a banquet of connection and compassion. What struck me was how many people showed up and how many were giving out pizza and hot chocolate. The impact was really seeing the community show up and the youth with lived experience mingling with them, being included as part of the community.

Another memory was from last year. I was sitting outside, watching the snow fall late at night in my tent and a dad and his daughter walked by. He had saw I posted I would be Camping out and approached me to give a cash donation to A Way Home. It was the first snowfall, it was cold outside, but the warmest gesture ever.

Reflecting that last year we were in the midst of a pandemic, with many unknowns, it was incredible to see how much the community gave. It really shows that the community is committed to the drive and purpose of A Way Home Kamloops and Katherine. The community showed they are committed to be rooted in action to reduce, prevent, and end youth homelessness."

- Leann Kopytko, Campout Supporter for 5 Years

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A Way Home Kamloops

Thank you for reading!

CAMPOUT

TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER #3

NOVEMBER 15TH - 19TH, 2021

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NEWS & UPDATES

ONLY 3 WEEKS AWAY FROM CAMPOUT!!

We've raised just over $33,000 for our Youth Housing First program and are sitting at 23 campers registered! We hope to have around 80 people camping out this year. Being virtual allows greater event accessibility for people with diverse abilities and young children! We hope to see a continued flow of Campers registering, so if you haven't yet told your family and friends, challenge them to Campout with you!

On Tuesday, we sent a delegation to City Council about A Way Home Kamloops, the programs we offer, and Campout To End Youth Homelessness. We are happy Mayor Ken Christian and Councilor Arjun Singh expressed their gratitude for the work we do. Councilor Singh committed to Camping out this year!

In news not related to Campout, A Way Home Kamloops and the BC Coalition to End Youth Homelessness had the honour of presenting on an exciting new law we are drafting for proposal to the provincial government in Katherine's name at the BC non-Profit Housing Association "Housing Central Conference". There were also two exciting awards related to Katherine announced at this Conference. Additionally, A Way Home Kamloops was also honoured by an award last week for our work in the field of youth housing. More info on Katherine's Law and these three awards on page 2.

Lastly, we have made the decision to move these weekly newsletters to FRIDAYS, to better allow robust reporting for your reading. Thank you for your continued support as we count down the days to our 5th Campout to End Youth Homelessness!

AWARDS & KATHERINE`S LAW

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF A WAY HOME KAMLOOPS & KATHERINE MCPARLAND

This week, youth with lived expertise from A Way Home Kamloops and the BC Coalition to End Youth Homelessness had the honour of being a part of the Housing Central Conference, hosted by BC Non-Profit Housing Association (BCNPHA). We presented on our work to develop a provincial law that will seek to eradicate the "superhighway into homelessness", as Katherine would call it. Katherine's Law would create a legal duty from the provincial government to ensure no youth "ages out" of government care without safe, affordable, and appropriate housing and wraparound supports. This includes automatic enrollment into post-majority supports, such as counselling. Katherine's Law is still in proposal drafting, but we hope to see it brought forward to the legislature soon!

At this same conference, Katherine McParland was honoured with the BCNPHA Affordable Housing Champion Award for her lifetime work in the youth housing sector. We truly believe that Katherine's legacy will be known for generations to come! You can watch the award reel from the conference here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5OpGf019zb0

We are excited to share the announcement of a new award in Katherine's name, that will annually recognize a youth housing service provider and their work in ending youth homelessness. This award will be led by the BC Coalition To End Youth Homelessness, in partnership with BCNPHA and BC Housing, with information on the nomination process to be released in Spring 2022.

Lastly, A Way Home Kamloops was honoured to receive the Deryk Thompson Award by SPARC BC. The significance of this award shares the values of A Way Home Kamloops, and represents our commitment to prevent and end youth homelessness in Kamloops and communities around the Province.

Thank you SPARC BC and BCNPHA for honouring the work of Katherine McParland, A Way Home Kamloops, and youth with lived expertise of homelessness!

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN CAMPING OUT

When preparing to Campout, it's important to know how to keep yourself safe in the cold!

Watch Campout Committee member, Nicholas Adams, share his tips for how to stay safe!

Click the image on the right to watch!

YOUTH HAVE A VOICE!

WORDS FROM A YOUTH WITH LIVED EXPERTISE

"I met Katherine in 2017 while I was going to TREC. I had just started school, left my first job, and was clean off substance for 5 months. I had written my life story to my English teacher, she came to me ad told me she was amazed by my story and told me she followed someone in the media who had a similar story to me. She said her name was Katherine McParland, and told me if I reached out to her, she would tailor my assignments. I had heard of people having similar life and foster stories to mine, but never so close to me. So I reached out, and I met Katherine, gave her my story, and within minutes Katherine looked at me and said I would make an amazing social worker. She shared some of her experience with me, and I felt like she was somebody who understood my life experiences. She did not make me feel bad about who I was, but for the first time in my life, she told me the importance of sharing my experiences to help create change. She said I would be a good social worker because I have the 'First Voice Experience'. This got my mind thinking, I could be something, I could do something, I could create change. Katherine drove me home after that, and it turns out, we lived in the same foster home, roughly 10 years apart. I did not expect to live after I got my grade 12, I thought I would fall back into my addiction, and end up homeless again. Looking up to Katherine, and all our similarities, and watching her successes, she made me believe youth from care could be successful.

Katherine was my only positive role model in life. Katherine made me believe youth from care were more than just a statistic, and she made me believe I would live a meaningful life for myself and help lead other youth from care to live meaningful lives. Katherine impacted me by being my inspiration to attend post-secondary. I have always wanted to help youth from care, and make sure no other youth had to experience what I did while growing up in foster care. I felt worthless, and like nobody would listen to me. I felt ashamed that I was in foster care, and I did not have a voice. I did not think it would ever be possible for me to go to university, and to help create change for youth, but seeing Katherine successfully do it, and her belief in me made me believe in myself. Katherine made me believe I would live long past my 19th birthday. She was the only person I looked up to, and the main inspiration behind where my passion lies, which is helping youth residing in government care, and ensure no youth ages out unless they are in safe, stable, housing."

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Thank you for reading!

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CAMPOUT

TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER #4

NOVEMBER 22ND - 26TH, 2021

NEWS & UPDATES

ONLY 2 WEEKS AWAY FROM CAMPOUT!!

At the time of this release, we've raised around $45,000 for our Youth Housing First programs and are sitting at 36 campers registered! Next week, we will be releasing our event itinerary so stay tuned!

This year's Campout, and all Campouts in the future, will be A Way Home Kamloops' public memorial for our late founder and Katherine McParland. We extend the invite to anyone who wishes to honour Katherine's legacy to join us for the presentations, even if they are not camping out afterwards.

We also have our Dungeons & Dragons sign-up available now! There are limited spots open for 6-8 players, new or not, to the roleplaying game! Read more on page 3.

Last weekend, British Columbians experienced catastrophic heavy rain, flooding, landslides, and washouts resulting in cutting people off from their homes and families. Along with this disconnect, many people lost their homes, have been displaced, and a few have lost their lives. A Way Home Kamloops would like to recognize the youth and their families in need of housing and supports.

With such catastrophic events, we expect to see an increase in our housing intakes over the next few months, as we historically have with wildfires. We will continue to do our best to serve youth in need during this time, and ask for your continued support in ensuring all youth have a safe, affordable, and appropriate place to call home.

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Campout 2017

Campout 2019

CAMPOUT MEMORIES

LOOKING BACK AT THE YEARS

"Campout to End Youth Homelessness has always been the best fundraiser I've ever attended. Campout brings the harsh reality of youth homelessness closer to those that haven't experienced a night in the cold. I have only attended two Campouts, the first one in 2017 and last year's in 2020. Participating in Campout has left a permanent mark on my heart.

In 2017, I arrived at the lot where boxes were set up for participants. As a taller individual, I chose a long box for maximum comfort. However, comfort was not the objective, and it was not achieved. I managed to get very little sleep, and every time I woke up my feet were freezing. There was nothing I could do to keep the bitter December cold from biting into my skin and causing shivers. This is the reality many youth face for more than just one communal night in a secure parking lot in early December. In 2020 Campout to End Youth Homelessness was a virtual event. I, along with many other campers, chose to join from our decks. The 2020 Campout didn't seem as cold as 2017, but that's not to say it wasn't without its challenges. My hardwood deck served as a great alarm clock when I rolled of the cushions I was using and onto the bare cold surface, shooting myself awake as my bare arms went from warm and cozy to icy and numb. The event brought people from around the province into a chat room to remember the recently passed Katherine McParland and educate each other on the struggles of homeless youth in their communities while still capturing the essence of being in person. 2021 will be my 3rd time joining A Way Home Kamloops and their Campout to End Youth Homelessness.

Although these seem like unpleasant experiences, I will continue to campout as it sheds a light on an often ignored issue. I believe camping out is worth doing not only to bring to light youth homelessness but because it shows the youth they and their situations are not ignored. It is meant as to be a single night of solitude and recognition of the many cold nights for those that do not have a home. I look forward to experiencing ways the cold can sneak past my defenses and wake me up to the reality that I am experiencing something for one night that many will experience for several months.

This event brings people close together and raises awareness on the epidemic that is youth homelessness in Kamloops I look forward to seeing you all there and experiencing the cold and snow on the night of December 10th."

- Daniel Galbraith, Youth Projects Coordinator at A Way Home Kamloops

VIDEO OF THE WEEK

HOW TO STAY WARM WHEN CAMPING OUT

Sleeping outside means that you'll be exposed to the frigid December cold!

Watch Campout Committee member, Nicholas Adams, share his tips for how to stay warm!

Click the image on the right to watch!

YOUTH HAVE A VOICE!

WORDS FROM A YOUTH WITH LIVED EXPERTISE

"A Way Home Kamloops is a grassroots organization for social change. It aims to elevate youth that have experienced hardships by taking a person-centered approach. Although Katherine McParland, the founding executive director is not here with us, her legacy lives on. She ignited a spark in many of us, myself included, to advocate for ourselves. A Way Home, its society members, youth with lived expertise, and staff are continuing a narrative of hope and empowerment. The hope comes from the strategies we form to help the youth we have served and those we will serve. Wrapforce specifically is an ingenious catchment strategy that makes sure every 'door' for youth at risk is the right one."

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS SIGN-UP

FOR ROLEYPLAYERS, NEW AND OLD!

Roleplayers rejoice!

We are thrilled to be bringing D&D back to our Campout event, and hope to continue to offer it in the years to come again! For any Campout veterans, you may remember we had D&D games offered at our 2018 and 2019 Campout.

Tyler Carpentier will be hosting our game for the evening of Campout, who we are very grateful for doing this! Tyler has been a long-time supporter of A Way Home Kamloops, such as providing a donation from KamCon 2019 (pictured top right).

To sign-up, please click HERE or the images to the right.

Spots are limited for 6-8 players, first come first served! You will be provided with pre-made character sheets, but you can provide your character preferences in the sign-up form.

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A Way Home Kamloops

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