The value of prevention is often described in the context of healthcare. If preventative measures can be taken, treatment of an illness can often be avoided. The prevention of health challenges has long been understood as a logical step in this field; however, connecting the notion of prevention to the issue of homelessness has only recently become a prominent discussion in Canada.

Raising the Roof’s new strategic directions aim to address this gap, proposing prevention as an integral ‘piece of the puzzle’ in putting an end to homelessness for good. Previously, much of the focus on addressing homelessness has been centred around Emergency Response – shelters, soup kitchens, drop-ins, etc. While these services are certainly needed, a focus on prevention aims to stop a person or family from facing homelessness, mitigating the need for intervention down the line. This is an important step in decreasing the flow into homelessness, and significantly reducing the cycle of poverty.

But what does homelessness prevention look like? There are several areas where prevention models could be used, and these differ for unique demographics. Individuals being discharged from a system are often at risk of homelessness; for example, young people leaving the child welfare system or individuals exiting the justice system. Family conflict and trauma such as intimate partner violence are also examples of instances that can lead to homelessness. For each of the pathways into homelessness, a prevention intervention could stop vulnerable individuals from becoming homeless.

Raising the Roof is excited to lead the national efforts in this area, working towards a day when all Canadians have a safe place to call home.

Using a proven model from Australia called ‘The Geelong Project’ and building upon the foundational work begun by The RAFT in Niagara, Raising the Roof will implement The Upstream Project in two pilot communities. This collaborative program will include both The RAFT and 360kids as Partner Agencies, and involves working with schools to distribute an assessment tool which will identify young people at risk of homelessness. Community Partner Agencies will then provide wraparound support to youth based on their individual needs.

By working with schools, The Upstream Project can provide a unique prevention intervention that will support vulnerable young people, ensuring that they have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Raising the Roof is thrilled to collaborate with the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and A Way Home on this project, along with our Lead Partner, the Intact Foundation.
Raising the Roof is thrilled to be one of the founding members of A Way Home, a national coalition dedicated to preventing, reducing, and ending youth homelessness in Canada. This is the first time that national leading organizations have come together to address the issue, working collaboratively to organize, plan and implement strategies to address youth homelessness in a co-ordinated, measurable and impactful way.

As the lead of the coalition’s Public Engagement ‘constellation’, Raising the Roof will support the development and distribution of campaigns and activities that will engage Canadians in long-term solutions to youth homelessness.

Learn more about A Way Home at www.awayhome.ca.
Raising the Roof’s 19th Annual Toque Campaign saw Canadians across the country connecting with their local agencies to support long-term solutions to homelessness.

From coast to coast, 49 Partner Agencies, three National Partners, and hundreds of volunteers participated in this year’s campaign. Events across the country took place on Toque Tuesday, including a hockey tournament, a winter coat giveaway, a pancake breakfast, and plenty of friendly faces in local transit stations. Everyone from city Mayors to NHL alumni joined the call, sporting their toques with pride and posting #ToqueSelfies to show their support.

50% of the gross proceeds from each Toque Campaign item benefit community Partner Agencies. Proceeds from toques bought in a community stay in that community (including online sales).

Remaining proceeds (after campaign costs) support Raising the Roof’s national initiatives, such as our Child & Family Homelessness Initiative and The Upstream Project.

* 40% / 10% is approximate.
How can I give?

Give up a Gift, or even a Party!
Ash’s birthday was fast approaching, and as a busy young professional his lifestyle didn’t offer him the time to plan a big party. As he explains “I thought to myself ‘what if I could get my friends together for my birthday and in lieu of gifts they could all pitch in $10 and help a great organization!’”. So I decided to have the birthday at a local restaurant, invited as many people as I could and voila! They were all very generous and loved the idea.” In total, Ash raised $700!

Interested in supporting Raising the Roof at your next milestone? We’re here to help! Please contact Leanne Boutwell, Development Coordinator at leanne@raisingtheroof.org or (416) 481-1838 x 204.

Battle of the 6ix
An enthusiastic group of students from George Brown College in Toronto, ON planned Battle of the 6ix, a battle of the bands event with 50% of all proceeds benefitting Raising the Roof. The event raised over $2000!
To find out more about how you can plan your next event in support of Raising the Roof, please contact Leanne Boutwell.

Become a Roof Raiser!
Our work at Raising the Roof would not be possible without the dedication of our hard-working volunteers. Whether it be out in the community, in the office or remotely from home, we are always looking to expand our enthusiastic volunteer community. Do you have a skill you would like to offer toward the cause of ending homelessness?
Do you want to be a Roof Raiser? Reach out to Paula Patryluk at paula@raisingtheroof.org to join the conversation.

Make a monthly donation
A small gift can make a big difference! To register for monthly donations, please visit our website or contact Arundel Gibson.

Planned Giving – Leave a lasting legacy
If you are considering a gift to Raising the Roof in your estate plans, please contact Arundel Gibson.

Our Funding Partners
We are very grateful to the following funding partners for their generous support:

The Toque Campaign
National Partners

Supporting Partners

The Upstream Project

Child & Family Homelessness

Lead Partners

Supporting Partners

Public Education Partner

Media Partner

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