

Youth homelessness campaign coming to Smiths Falls, Perth, Carleton Place

discoversmithsfalls.ca/youth-homelessness-campaign-coming-smiths-falls-perth-carleton-place/

9/9/2016

Submitted

From Sept.30 to Oct. 3, businessman and entrepreneur Joe Roberts, will be pushing a shopping cart through Lanark County and Smiths Falls to raise awareness about youth homelessness. His journey for this national trek started May 1, 2016 in St. John's Newfoundland and will end Sept. 30, 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia. During this 9,000 km and 17-month trip, Roberts will be making hundreds of stops to get involved with local community events across the country.

The Push for Change, partnering together with Raise the Roof Canada and The National Coalition to End Youth Homelessness, are working to build a prevention framework called The Upstream Project. The Push for Change will share funds raised while in Lanark County & Smiths Falls between the Upstream Project and the United Way Lanark County, who will distribute the funds to agencies serving homeless youth.



Why youth homelessness?

Roberts experienced homelessness himself at a young age, and transformed his difficult life to become a successful businessman and entrepreneur. He has personally experienced the power of possibility thinking in the face of some of life's biggest obstacles, and he is dedicated to sharing this possibility mindset with others who are going through their own challenges.

The key to ending homelessness is in prevention, combined with emergency services and sustainable housing. Often we overlook the issue of prevention, but it's the best hope for helping young people to transition safely into adulthood. It is also the most cost-effective and pragmatic approach to investing in a problem that looks like it has no end.

The facts:

- The annual cost to keep a single youth in the shelter system is between \$30,000-\$40,000 – and that's if a shelter is even available.
- The cost of keeping a single youth in a detention centre is estimated at \$250 a day, or \$100,000 a year.
- Canada's total homeless population – estimated by government to be 150,000 and by non-governmental agencies to be as high as 300,000, is costing taxpayers as much as \$7 billion annually.
- A study completed a year ago by the Algonquin College Applied Research & Innovation Centre estimated that 45 youth are homeless in Lanark County and Smiths Falls during a given year. However, this estimate has been proven to be low. In the first seven months of 2016, 60 plus youth have contacted the Homeless Intervention and Prevention Case Managers in our communities, because they were experiencing homelessness or were at risk of becoming homeless.

Locally, partners are working on hosting a number of events over Roberts four-day stay to highlight the need to end

youth homeless within Lanark County and Smiths Falls.

The Push For Change team will be in Carleton Place on Friday, Sept. 30, in Perth on Saturday, Oct. 1, and Smiths Falls on Monday, Oct. 3.

How to get involved

If you want to get involved with ending youth homelessness, here are some ways to do so.

Donate: Visit www.thepushforchange.com, or to give specifically to local initiatives, go to www.lanarkunitedway.com.

Take the Barefoot Challenge: Participate by texting BOOTSUWLC to 41010 to donate \$10 towards preventing youth homelessness, go without your boots or shoes for one hour, and share your experience by posting pictures or videos on social media.

Walk with Joe Health & Wellness Challenge: Register as an individuals or a team, set a fundraising goal and match Joe's steps.

Celebrity Cart: Raise \$1,000 per kilometre to walk with Joe using an online crowd funding.

Donate: Visit www.thepushforchange.com, or to give specifically to local initiatives, go to www.lanarkunitedway.com.

Share