

THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

Campaign Press Kit



@pushforchange
#pushforchange



THE
PUSH FOR
CHANGE®

AGIR
POUR LE
CHANGEMENT

Mission: Prevent Youth Homelessness in Canada

Table of contents

The Push for Change overview	3, 4
Sponsors and partners	5
Campaign route and key dates	6
Press release	7, 8
Key messages	
The Upstream Project...where the fundraising dollars go	9, 10
Facts and figures	11
Letters of support	
Kathleen Wynne, Premier of Ontario	12
Mayor John Tory, City of Toronto	13
OPP	14
RCMP	15
Deputy Premier of New Brunswick	16
Alberta Health Services	17
National Learning Community	18
Raising the Roof	19
The team	20
Multimedia and contact info	21

Key media coverage

The Push For Change is grateful to Canada's media outlets and acknowledges their support and participation visit www.thepushforchange.com/news-coverage for all of our up to date media coverage.

Hear & read MP's & MPP's statements of support acknowledging The Push For Change. www.thepushforchange.com/support/



Tool Kit...for our Community Champions, please visit Media/Resources from our website to download your tool kit and fun(d)raising initiatives

Overview



The Push for Change Campaign is a national trek and youth empowerment movement designed to inspire, educate and challenge Canadians to realize their possibilities while changing the way we look at and address youth homelessness.

Commencing on May 1, 2016, Joe Roberts will push a shopping cart 9,000 km across Canada, engaging with schools and communities along the way to raise awareness and funds to help end youth homelessness. At the age of 18, Joe Roberts was living under a bridge as a homeless drug addict in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. While Joe was at the lowest point of his homelessness, he made a promise to himself that should he ever get out of his plight, he would do something to "pay it forward". The Push for Change is that promise realized. His transformation to success in the face of immense adversity and tremendous challenge exemplifies what is possible while demonstrating the untapped potential that lies within all of us.

The Story

Joe Roberts and Dr. Sean Richardson founded The Push for Change (PFC) in early 2012 with the idea that awareness and prevention was the key to ending youth homelessness. Over the next four years, Joe and Marie Roberts worked tirelessly to breathe life into this vision, secured funding and partners and created a national youth empowerment movement known today as The Push for Change. The launch date of May 1, 2016 was set for Joe to push a shopping cart across Canada to raise awareness and funds to help bring an end to Youth Homelessness. The shopping cart represents a symbol of homelessness the very outcome we are trying to avoid for future generations of young people. It also represents Joe's transformation as a former homeless youth. Our goal is to inspire and engage Canadians to join PFC in a series of interactive calls to action.

The Problem

The Cost of Youth Homelessness

According to [The Homeless Hub](#); it may be true that some homeless youth leave home for fairly insignificant reasons, but for most young people who become homeless, the real causes of youth homelessness are physical, sexual and emotional abuse, involvement with the child welfare system, discrimination, homophobia and poverty. The annual cost to



keep a single youth in the shelter system is estimated to be between \$30,000-\$40,000. The cost of keeping a single youth in a detention centre is estimated at \$250 a day, or \$100,000 a year. There are approximately 35,000 young people across Canada who are homeless or living at homeless shelters and thousands more who are at-risk each year. On any given night 30,000 people are homeless and it is estimated that 20% of these are young people 16-24. Homelessness costs the Canadian economy up to 7 billion annually.

The Solution

As youth homelessness is entered through a predictable path, innovative ways to engage youth who are at the crossroads of choosing homelessness or NOT must be created. Addressing homelessness is a complex issue, but research has pointed to three key areas (1) Prevention (2) Emergency services and (3) Sustainable housing.

The Push for Change will fund prevention. Dollars raised during the trek will support Raising the Roof’s initiative; the “The Upstream Project”, a Homelessness Prevention Framework that will be used in communities across Canada. After implementation of the prevention strategy program, the results will be measurable in each community across Canada.

VISION

To engage the country with the “Possibility” of ending youth homelessness as we know it today.

To create a country where vulnerable youth are supported at the crucial crossroad in their life — keeping them engaged in school and community and preventing them from entering homelessness.

VALUES

We believe that Ending Youth Homelessness is possible.

We believe all young people deserve to reach their full potential.

We believe inspired action can change the world.



Entering Ontario through Hawkesbury, September 22, 2016

Sponsors and partners

Presented by



CANADIAN PIPING TRADES MÉTIERS DE LA TUYAUTERIE



THE PUSH FOR CHANGE

AGIR POUR LE CHANGEMENT



Community Safety Partner



Campaign route and key dates



THE
PUSH FOR
CHANGE®

AGIR
POUR LE
CHANGEMENT

Walking across Canada to support
the end of youth homelessness

- 517 days
- 9000 km
- 10 provinces and 3 territories
- 400 community events



Arrival dates for major cities:

St. John's	NL	May 1, 2016
Sydney	NS	June 16, 2016
Halifax	NS	July 1, 2016
Charlottetown	PEI	July 19, 2016
Moncton	NB	July 26, 2016
Quebec City	QC	Sept. 3, 2016
Montreal	QC	Sept. 19, 2016
Ottawa	ON	Sept. 26, 2016
Toronto	ON	Oct. 23, 2016
Hamilton	ON	Oct. 28, 2016
London	ON	Dec. 8, 2016
Barrie	ON	Dec. 26, 2016
Sudbury	ON	Jan 15-16, 2017
Saulte Saint Marie	ON	Feb. 1, 2017
Thunder Bay	ON	Mar. 14, 2017
Winnipeg	MN	Apr. 19, 2017
Regina	SK	May 21, 2017
Calgary	AB	July 1, 2017
Kelowna	BC	Aug. 7, 2017
Nanaimo	BC	Sept. 7, 2017
Victoria	BC	Sept. 18, 2017
Vancouver	BC	Sept. 30, 2017

City visits off-trek:

Iqaluit Nunavut	TBD
Saskatoon SK	May 30, 2017
Prince Albert SK	May 31, 2017
Edmonton AB	June 30, 2017
Yellowknife NWT	July 2, 2017
Whitehorse YK	Sept. 8, 2017



<http://www.thepushforchange.com/the-route/>



<http://www.thepushforchange.com/events/>



Press release

The Push for Change Foundation
c/o 3242 Mayne Crescent
Coquitlam, BC V3E 1N1

The National Launch for The Push for Change Campaign.

The small but mighty team of 3; Joe Roberts - Spokesperson, Marie Roberts - Campaign Director and Robert Cook - Road Manager, will depart Cape Spear, NL on May 1st, 2016 and conclude in Vancouver, B.C on or about September 30th, 2017.

April 11th, 2016 - On May 1, 2016, Joe Roberts, former homeless youth, will push a shopping cart across Canada to raise awareness and dollars to prevent and support the end of youth homelessness. This national trek will begin May 1, 2016 from St. John's, Newfoundland and end on or about September 30, 2017 in Vancouver, British Columbia, a 9,000km, 17-month journey.

The Push for Change aims to

- Engage the country with the “Possibility” of ending youth homelessness as we know it today
- Discuss what we need to do to Prevent, Reduce and End Youth Homelessness
- Create a country where vulnerable youth are supported at the crucial crossroads in their life, keeping them engaged in school and community and preventing them from entering homelessness
- Raise money to support prevention models and local emergency services
- Inspire a nation with the idea that anything is possible
- Engage the people in this country to take personal action to make a difference

Throughout this journey, Joe and The Push for Change team will engage with Canada's population by participating in over 400 school and community events.

A peek at key events:

- July 1, 2016 – Canada Day Celebration, Halifax NS
- September 23, 2016 – Welcome PFC into Ontario, Ottawa, ON
- October 23, 2016 – Yonge/Dundas Square, Toronto, ON
- December 31, 2016 – New Year's Eve Countdown, Barrie, ON
- July 1, 2016 - Canada's 150th Birthday, Calgary, AB

“The campaign is both an awareness and fundraising endeavor”

So why youth homelessness, other than the personal connection for Joe? Executive Director Joe Roberts says, “Because we now know what needs to happen if we ever want to end youth homelessness. The key is in prevention combined with emergency services and sustainable housing. Often the issue of prevention is one that is overlooked, but it's the one that offers the best hope for helping young people 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. If we keep doing what we have always done, we will keep getting what we have always gotten.”

The campaign is both an awareness and fundraising endeavor which teams up with educators, organized labor, law enforcement, political, and both national and local community based organizations to spread the message. Fundraising proceeds from this endeavor will be allocated to [Raising the Roof](#), to fund [The Upstream Project](#) – a school based prevention framework to end youth homelessness.



Cross Canada Trek

Canada has a history of spawning extraordinary individuals who have fought the odds and taken on personal journeys to make a difference. The Push for Change is humbled to follow these extraordinary examples as we connect to our vision that:

- We believe inspired action can change the world.
- Ending Youth Homelessness is possible.
- We believe all young people deserve to reach their full potential.

There are many ways to get involved as an individual or group. Share the conversation on social media using #pushforchange. Please visit www.thepushforchange.com. Host an event, participate in our SleepOut Challenge, Walk with Joe, or Celebrity Cart fun(d)raisers, book a school presentation, or attend a community event near you.

During the campaign (May 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017), *all donations received will be allocated to Raising the Roof for The Upstream Project. *Where a youth homelessness organization takes part in the planning and execution of a PFC Community event, 50% of the funds raised will be donated back to their organization.

National Partners - A Way Home, Raising the Roof, National Learning Community, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and the Homeless Hub

Presenting Partner - United Association of Canada

For more information on our National and Presenting Partners visit our website at <http://www.thepushforchange.com/partners/>

Raising the Roof - provides national leadership on long-term solutions to homelessness through partnership and collaboration with diverse stakeholders, investment in local communities, and public education.

The Push for Change Foundation is a National charity led by Joe Roberts, a successful businessman who was homeless as a teenager. Joe will push a shopping cart (a symbol of homelessness) across Canada, raising awareness regarding youth homelessness prevention, engaging communities, and raising funds for the Upstream Project. Canada Revenue Agency Charity # (86361 6017 – RR0001) www.thepushforchange.com

Local and National Media agencies are formally invited to contact Irene Carroll to schedule interviews with Joe Roberts or The Push for Change team.

Irene Carroll, PR Specialist
irene@iseeassociates.ca
416-366-5473

###

Release date: September 15, 2016



The Upstream Project

Preventing Youth Homelessness by Working in Schools

The best way to address youth homelessness is to work upstream and prevent its occurrence in the first place. Countries such as Australia have achieved great success in addressing youth homelessness by developing integrated community responses that operate within the school system. Why schools? Because virtually every young person who becomes homeless was in school at one point, and very likely was in contact with an adult (teacher, guidance counselor, coach) who knew something was wrong.

In Canada, our approach to youth homelessness needs to shift from a focus on helping young people after they become homeless, to doing everything we can to prevent it altogether. The Upstream Project will support communities in the implementation of effective school-based strategies, in order to reduce the number of young people who become homeless. The good news is we already know how to do this.

What is the Upstream Project?

The Upstream Project is part of an international 'Living Lab' focused on taking the innovative approaches developed in Australia and adapting them to the Canadian context. The Upstream Project is particularly interested in adapting the evidence-based successes of **The Geelong Project (TGP)**, a ground breaking partnership that helps young people at risk of homelessness. TGP utilizes a 'community of schools and youth services' model of early intervention for young people who are at risk of disengaging from school, becoming homeless and entering the justice system. With TGP, all young people, in any given school, are assessed using an evidence-based assessment tool. Those who are identified as being at higher risk of homelessness are offered comprehensive interventions based on a determination of both needs and assets. Young people and their families are provided with necessary supports aimed at solidifying family relations (if it is safe for the youth to do so), increasing school engagement and success, and reducing the risk of family breakdown, dropping out of school and involvement in crime. The unique TGP model of youth homelessness intervention has been extensively evaluated over the past five years and has a strong evidence base.

What does the Upstream Project hope to achieve?

The goal of the Upstream Project is to transform the way we respond to youth homelessness by shifting the focus to prevention. Over the next five years, we hope to support 25 Canadian communities (up to five a year) with planning and implementation of school-based prevention programs modeled on the Geelong project. The outcome will be a demonstrated reduction in the number of young people who experience homelessness.

How will this be done?

Drawing on the strengths and capacities of core project partners, The Upstream Project will educate, inspire and support communities to do this work. The core objectives that will drive the activities of the project include:

- a) **Knowledge Generation** - Develop the knowledge base and resources to support communities and governments with the planning and implementation of school-based youth homelessness prevention strategies and practices.
- b) **Community Engagement** - Build interest, capacity and readiness in communities, schools and government to support a shift from emergency response to prevention.

- c) **Technical Support** – Provide communities with technical support to plan and implement school-based youth homelessness prevention interventions.
- d) **Program Implementation** – Provide funding to support implementation at the community level.
- e) **Evaluation** – Monitor implementation and results to demonstrate a reduction in youth homelessness.



Project Activities and Preliminary Budget*

Year 1 - Development phase

Activity	Description	Cost
Toolkit	Development of a web-based resource to give communities the tools they need to plan, implement and evaluate the program	\$50,000
Project Pilot	To adapt, test and evaluate the Canadian version of the Geelong Project	\$115,000
Community Facilitator	One FTE staff position (benefits included) to provide technical support and facilitate community adaptation of The Upstream Project	\$80,000
Community Engagement	Promoting the Upstream Project to communities and government, facilitating the selection of community sites eligible for funding	\$20,000
Overhead	Administrative costs	\$40,000
TOTAL		\$305,000

Year 2-6 - Operational phase

Community Facilitator	One FTE staff position (benefits included) to provide technical support and facilitate community adaptation of The Upstream Project	\$80,000
Community Engagement	Promoting the Upstream Project to communities and government, facilitating the selection of community sites eligible for funding	\$20,000
Community Start Up funds	Funds for communities to support planning and implementation of the Geelong project in their first year. Communities will be selected through a competitive process.	\$100,000 (x5 annually)
Overhead	Administrative costs.	\$60,000
TOTAL	Per year	\$660,000

*Budget numbers are estimates and subject to change.

The Upstream Project: A Collaborative Venture

The Upstream Project involves collaboration between the following national organizations, each of which will play a unique role in the planning and delivery of the project:

Raising the Roof: As Canada’s leading homelessness charity, RtR provides strong and effective national leadership and raises public awareness. RtR will be responsible for administration of funds and supporting communities in the planning and implementation of the Upstream Project.

Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, a university-based research consortium committed to conducting and mobilizing research so that it has a greater impact on policy and practice, will provide thought-leadership to the initiative, tool kit development and evaluation support.

A Way Home is a national coalition of organizations working together to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness. A Way Home will be responsible for pan-Canadian community engagement, government relations, and selection of communities for participation.

Push for Change is a national charity led by Joe Roberts, a successful businessman who was homeless as a teenager. Joe will push a shopping cart across Canada, raising awareness regarding youth homelessness prevention, engaging communities, and raising funds for the Upstream Project.

Facts and figures

Cost Analysis Of Homelessness

As of 2013, homelessness cost the Canadian economy \$7.05 billion annually (up from \$4.5-6 billion in 2007). This includes provision of emergency shelters and community supports, but also accounts for the increased costs of emergency services (including fire, police and EMS), health care, the criminal justice system etc.

Significant research has been done that explores the cost of housing someone in jail, hospitals or the shelter system compared to housing them in social or supportive housing. The difference is quite shocking. In a 2005 study by Pomeroy which looked at costs in four Canadian cities, institutional responses (jails, hospitals etc.) cost \$66,000-\$120,000 annually, emergency shelters cost \$13,000-\$42,000 annually whereas supportive and transitional housing cost \$13,000-\$18,000 and affordable housing without supports was a mere \$5,000-\$8,000.

This cost analysis doesn't look at the social and human costs. Not only is putting someone in housing cheaper, it is also much more humane. The longer someone remains homeless the greater likelihood that their physical and mental health will deteriorate and there is an increased chance of an early death.



Ending Youth Homelessness

WE BELIEVE THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PREVENT, REDUCE AND ULTIMATELY END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

When we say this, we do not mean that there will never be young people forced to leave home in a crisis who will need emergency supports and temporary housing. There will continue to be people in both urban and rural areas who must leave home because of family conflict and violence, eviction or other emergencies, as well as those who simply face challenges in making the transition to independent living.

Rather, ending youth homelessness means eliminating a broad social problem that traps young people in an ongoing state of homelessness.

When young people and their families do not have access to necessary supports, homelessness is often a result. Many young people are forced to leave their communities, and, without access to permanent and age appropriate housing and necessary supports, come to depend on emergency services.

Becoming mired in homelessness often leads to exploitation, declining health and wellbeing, and most certainly an uncertain future. Without appropriate prevention strategies or early interventions that help young people get off the streets as quickly as possible, they may become entrenched in a lifelong struggle with poverty, addiction and mental health challenges. We also know that repeated cycles of youth homelessness can lead to chronic adult homelessness.

To ensure that young people do not become trapped in homelessness, we must stop their "transition" into adult homelessness and ultimately into a life-long reliance on the adult social service sector.



Statistics

- An estimated 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness each year
- 35,000 Canadians experience homelessness on any given night
- 50,000+ Canadians experience hidden homelessness, such as couchsurfing, sleeping in a car, or other precarious housing
- 20% of the homeless population are young people aged 16-24
- Aboriginal peoples are over-represented in the homeless population – 1 in 4 people experiencing homelessness identify as Aboriginal or First Nations
- One of the fastest growing demographics of the homeless population is children & families





Premier of Ontario - Première ministre de l'Ontario

October 19, 2016

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

I am pleased to express my wholehearted support for The Push for Change campaign, and to welcome Mr. Joe Roberts to Toronto as the Ontario leg of his 17-month walk across Canada continues.

Through his steadfast determination and willingness to share his powerful personal story, Joe serves as an inspiration to all who are joined in solidarity to address the problem of youth homelessness.

I would like to acknowledge the sponsors, fundraisers and community activists who have lent their time and effort to support this worthy cause. I would also like to thank all who have chosen to participate in the October 23 Walk with Joe parade at Yonge and Dundas Square, including the talented entertainers and artists who will help make this a most memorable event.

I wish Joe every success as he continues his journey, and thank him once again for his commitment to this worthy cause.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Wynne".

Kathleen Wynne
Premier



October 5, 2016

Message from the Mayor

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to Joe Roberts as you pass through Toronto on The Push for Change. Your journey across Canada has already been successful in raising awareness and funds for the prevention of youth homelessness.

As you sacrifice your time and effort to this cause, you are making a difference in the lives of many high-risk young people. Your own story has been one of bravery, survival and courage. It has inspired many to keep fighting and for others to join-in.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, I wish you a successful journey as you push for change. We thank you for your commitment to ending end youth homelessness.

Yours truly,

Mayor John Tory
City of Toronto



J.V.N. (Vince) Hawkes
Commissioner Le Commissaire File #: 100-00

December 18, 2014

Mr. Joe Roberts
52 Draper Crescent
Barrie ON L4N 6B1

Dear Mr. Roberts:

It was a distinct pleasure meeting you at our Commissioner's Conference in Huntsville. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is comprised of 9,000 civilian and uniform members who are dedicated to community safety throughout the Province of Ontario. Needless to say, we have many initiatives underway at any given time to ensure we accomplish our vision of "Safe Communities ... A Secure Ontario." Each year we receive over two million calls in our Communications Centres and, in recent years, we have noticed an increase in the calls pertaining to individuals who are suffering from a mental health illness.

As you can imagine, our members encounter a myriad of situations that often require help for individuals that policing cannot provide – counselling, medication, special programs, temporary/permanent shelter, clothing, food, etc., are just a few examples. OPP members are community catalysts and we do everything we can to develop strong partnerships with community service agencies, mental health experts, etc., to ensure those we encounter who are suffering get the help they need. Partnerships are key, and as our Mental Health Strategy evolves and matures, working with individuals, such as you, will help us tremendously. I am not only interested, but excited and committed to forming a stronger partnership with you as you prepare to embark on the "Push for Change" campaign.

As mentioned above, members of the OPP are catalysts in the communities we are privileged to serve. I will ensure that when the "Push for Change" arrives in Ontario, the OPP will be there to fully support you and that OPP members will help in making sure communities across Ontario hear your vitally important message.

Let me close by saying that your presentation to those in attendance at our Commissioner's Conference was absolutely thought provoking, powerful and very moving. It was very motivational for the group to hear what happens when "things go right." I heard personally from numerous officers in attendance that they were emotionally impacted by your message and so very proud to be a police officer, and specifically a member of the OPP due to our organization's link to your life experience.

Once again, it was a great pleasure to meet you and hear your message. I look forward to supporting you with the "Push for Change."

Yours truly,

J.V.N. (Vince) Hawkes, O.O.M.

/rb



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada

Commanding Officer Commandant divisionnaire

1445 Regent St.
Fredericton, NB
E3B 4Z8

2016-03-23

Mr. Joe Roberts
52 Draper Crescent
Barrie, ON L4N 6B1

Dear Joe,

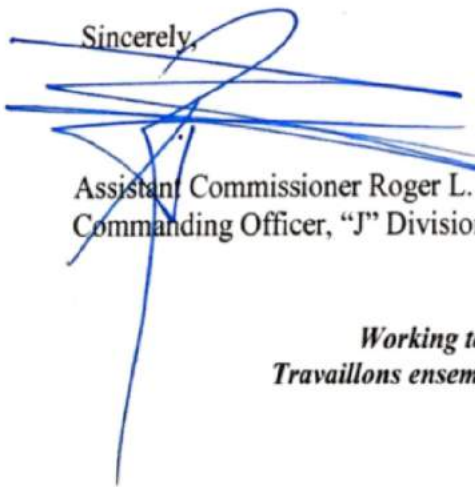
I was profoundly moved when I first heard you speak at the Ontario Police Commissioners Executive Development Symposium. I knew that I had to bring your message back to New Brunswick and do what I could to help you achieve your mission: "To create a country where vulnerable youth are supported at the crucial crossroads in their life - keeping them engaged in school and community and preventing them from entering homelessness".

The presentation about your personal life story of losing your father at a young age, homelessness and drug addiction touched the audience in Fredericton as they at some point in their policing career had come across similar stories of young persons who had fallen between the cracks with no way back. You inspired the audience to believe they too can make a difference when you credit your journey from a life of homelessness to becoming a very successful CEO to your mother and a brief interaction with a police officer when you were at your lowest. Your message, that every interaction we have in our lives can make a difference, is a powerful one, particularly for police officers who often encounter people at vulnerable moments in their lives.

The RCMP in "J" division along with its partner agencies look forward to supporting "The Push for Change" as you embark on a Canada wide journey to end youth homelessness and commit to assisting you with your voyage through New Brunswick.

I am looking forward to walking alongside you this summer in support of "The Push for Change".

Sincerely,



Assistant Commissioner Roger L. Brown, O.O.M.
Commanding Officer, "J" Division

*Working together to build a safer New Brunswick
Travaillons ensemble pour bâtir un Nouveau-Brunswick plus sûr*

Canada

March 16, 2016

Letter of support Joe Roberts Push for Change campaign

It is a pleasure to lend my support to Joe Roberts and the *Push for Change Initiative*. I had the opportunity to meet Mr. Roberts and hear him speak at St. Thomas University. I was inspired by his personal story and his dedication to helping Canada's homeless youth make better choices.

I would like to congratulate Joe Roberts and his team on their tremendous work in creating the *Push for Change Initiative*. This program emphasizes the importance of prevention-focused partnerships and the role that community involvement plays in ensuring that youth make more informed decisions. This proactive and collaborative approach is both effective and commendable. As Canadians and New Brunswickers, I believe that we all have a role to play in putting an end to youth homelessness.

I wish you all the best in your voyage across Canada. I trust that your journey will create awareness of the challenges facing Canada's homeless youth and that your efforts will inspire others to take part in making a difference.

Sincerely,



Hon. Stephen Horsman

Deputy Premier



ALBERTA
HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Minister

March 16, 2016

Mr. Joe Roberts
The Push For Change Foundation
c/o 3242 Mayne Crescent
Coquitlam, BC V3E 1E1

Dear Mr. Roberts:

I would like to congratulate and commend you on your commitment to raising awareness about youth homelessness.

Alberta shares your enthusiasm and commitment to this critical issue. Our plan, *Supporting Healthy and Successful Transitions to Adulthood: A Plan to Prevent and Reduce Youth Homelessness*, similarly prioritizes the need for preventing youth from becoming homeless in the first place. You can view the provincial Youth Plan at <http://humanservices.alberta.ca/documents/plan-to-prevent-and-reduce-youth-homelessness.pdf>.

We eagerly await your anticipated Summer 2017 arrival. We will be sure to communicate your Alberta route to our community partners across the province in an effort to raise further awareness about the Push for Change movement. Please continue to keep us apprised of your plans.

Sincerely,


Irfan Sabir
Minister



11 Ordnance Street, Toronto, ON M6K 1A1
www.learningcommunity.ca

9 March 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I'm writing this letter in support of the Push for Change. This dynamic, thoughtful, comprehensive campaign and charitable effort represents a significant change in how we think about youth homelessness. Across the country the paradigm shift is to prevent, reduce and end youth homelessness instead of merely providing an emergency response.

The National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness unanimously endorses the Push for Change. As we move to formalize a National Coalition to End Youth Homelessness over the next year, the Push for Change will factor heavily in our public awareness, youth engagement, and prevention strategies. We will work collaboratively with the Push for Change to ensure that our efforts on preventing, reducing, and ending youth homelessness are aligned.

The National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness is a pan-Canadian network of leading youth serving organizations across the country who work collaboratively on key issues, share promising practices and develop strategies and tools to strengthen our sector and more effectively address issues pertaining to youth homelessness in Canada. Founded in 2006 through the National Initiatives Program of Eva's Initiatives (Toronto), we are the only pan-Canadian network of its kind on youth homelessness. Collectively, we provide supports and services to over 14,000 young people every year.

The Learning Community is based on international models of communities of practice developed to strengthen the practice in our sector and create valuable connections between organizations. In bringing leading youth serving organizations together, we strengthen our individual agencies. The Learning Community meets annually and members work throughout the year on key priorities identified through our strategic planning process.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Redman

Melanie Redman, Director and Co-Chair, National Learning Community on Youth Homelessness



Joe Roberts
Push for Change
c/o 3242 Mayne Crescent
Coquitlam, BC
V3E 1E1

April 23, 2015

Dear Joe:

This is a letter of support for your Push for Change walk across Canada to help increase awareness of youth homelessness and raise funds to support The Upstream Project: Preventing youth homelessness by working in schools. This project is a collaboration between Raising the Roof, the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness and A Way Home, the emerging Coalition to End Youth Homelessness.

The best way to address youth homelessness is to work upstream and prevent its occurrence in the first place. Countries such as Australia have achieved great success in addressing youth homelessness by developing integrated community responses that operate within the school system. Why schools? Because virtually every young person who becomes homeless was in school at one point, and very likely was in contact with an adult (teacher, guidance counselor, coach) who knew something was wrong.

In Canada, our approach to youth homelessness needs to shift from a focus on helping young people after they become homeless, to doing everything we can to prevent it altogether. The Upstream Project will support communities in the implementation of effective school-based strategies, in order to reduce the number of young people who become homeless.

In raising funds for The Upstream project through Push for Change, you will be supporting the first prevention program of its kind in Canada. Together, we believe we can truly put an end to youth homelessness in this country.

We wish you great success in your endeavors and are very pleased to support this initiative.
Sincerely,

Carolann Barr
Executive Director

263 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 200 Toronto, ON M4R 1B1
Phone: (416) 481-1838 Fax: (416) 481-187
2www.raisingtheroof.org Charitable# 139744569RR0001

The team

JOE ROBERTS

Joe Roberts is an inspirational example of overcoming adversity and managing change.

In 1989, he was living under a bridge, homeless on skid row. Today he is an advocate, author and the Executive Director of The Push for Change.

Joe has witnessed human behaviour at its depths and its peaks, in personal and professional life, and he has captured his experiences in thought-leading principles that are critical to success.

He is the former President and CEO of a successful multi-media company. Joe is a well polished inspirational speaker that has delivered his keynote to over 1,000,000 people over the last 15 years.

He is committed to helping young people break through their most difficult barriers and is the perfect front man for The Push for Change.

Joe thrives on the idea of Being On Purpose.

MARIE ROBERTS – CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR

As the Campaign Director, Marie manages the entire campaign including events, and provides all administrative support to The Push for Change.

With a 25 year career in accounting, her analytical, technical, and organizational skills have proven invaluable in developing The Push for Change campaign with Joe Roberts. Her leadership abilities and relationship management lend themselves well to her role as Campaign Director.

During the 18 month trek her main duties include managing the team, the fundraising campaigns, the events, logistics and routes, the budget, volunteers and in general being the go-to-person for all Trek-related operations. She is Joe's champion and support person.

Deep down Marie has always been a nurturer, someone you can count on and someone who is highly dependable. She is the "glue" that holds teams and projects together. Her role in the business world as well as her role as a friend, a daughter, a sister and a mother reflect this deeply. When asked if she would take on that role with PFC there was no moment of pause. Her commitment was swift and has remained constant. We are fortunate to have her at the helm.

Also worthy to note; Marie is Joe's new bride, their history spans back 30 years as high school sweethearts in the 1980's. Some people say working together is something couples shouldn't do. We think that's nonsense as there is no better team to tackle Canada!

marie@thepushforchange.com



Multimedia and contact



@pushforchange

#pushforchange



THE
PUSH FOR
CHANGE®

AGIR
POUR LE
CHANGEMENT

CONTACT INFO

Public Relations

Irene Carroll
irene@iseeassociates.ca
416-366-5473

Campaign and Events

Marie Roberts
marie@thepushforchange.com
778-875-5202