

Towards a POLICY on HOMELESSNESS

Réseau SOLIDARITÉ Itinérance du Québec
Platform of Demands

September, 2006



TOWARDS A HOLISTIC VISION OF HOMELESSNESS

Our objective with this platform is to put forward an overall vision of the homeless phenomenon, that surpasses the sole responsibility of Health and Social Services, and brings about concrete solutions around which the stakeholders in homelessness can mobilize and engage with the different levels of government to make this a collective responsibility.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

A Conviction

It is unacceptable that people are condemned to live on the street.

A Position

Homelessness calls for collective responsibility.

An Affirmation

People that are homeless have the same rights as other citizens and these rights must be defended.

A Willingness

To build a more just society, in which each of us has a place and is asked to contribute.

HOMELESSNESS: WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?

Homelessness results from a process of exclusion and marginalization. It is affecting more and more people of all ages and types. It has many faces, but certain common denominators often apply (poverty, lack of housing, housing instability, isolation, disassociation, psychological distress, criminalization). Homelessness results from a combination of structural factors (e.g. the low level of social assistance payments) and individual factors (personal and professional failures, mental and physical health problems, addictions, etc.).

OUR DEMANDS

To have an in-depth review of public policies and the practices that flow from them; as well as putting in place or reinforcing interventions by the community and public sectors to support **THESE PERSONS**, improve their **LIVING CONDITIONS**, facilitate their **RETURN TO STABLE HOUSING**, and ensure that their **RIGHTS** are respected.

For the complete text, consult our website at www.rapsim.org

RSIQ Contact: **Nathalie Rech**, co-ordinator, (514) 861-0202 or solidarite-itinerance@hotmail.com



Objective 1 Citizenship

That discrimination, repression and criminalization cease. Because each of us has the right to circulate in public spaces and occupy the place of a citizen.

Means A: Give Back Access To Public Places To Homeless People

Means B: Develop Legal Instruments Against "Not In My Back Yard"



Objective 2 A Decent Income

Because each person has a right to a decent income, sufficient to cover their basic needs.

Means C: Raise Income Levels

Means D: Improve Access To Income Support Measures

Means E: Establish Tax Measures That Aim At A More Equitable Distribution Of Wealth



Objective 3 The Right To Housing

That housing which is being offered corresponds to real needs. Because each person has a right to housing which is adequate, safe and affordable.

Means F: Undertake A Major Social Housing Construction Program

Means G: Make Significant Investments In Community Support

Means H: Strengthen Measures To Regulate The Private Housing Market

Means I: Prevent Homelessness Among Persons Leaving Institutions



Objective 4 The Right To Education

Because people living in homelessness must be supported by varied educational practices and methods of socio-professional re-integration.

Means J: Promote The Right To Education Of Homeless Persons Or Those At Risk

Means K: Support Workplace Insertion Practices



Objective 5 The Right To Health

Because everyone should have access to prevention care and curative treatments, to free, confidential, adequate and free-choice services (for physical or mental health as well as social services).

Means L: Guarantee That Health And Social Welfare Services Are Accessible And Equitable

Means M: Respect The Principles Of Voluntary Participation And Confidentiality

Means N: Strengthen Measures To Support Families And Youth In Difficulty



Objective 6 A Network Of Support And Solidarity

Because community organizations are the places which provide help and a sense of belonging for those experiencing homelessness.

Means O: Recognize The Social Provision Of Community Assistance Agencies Regarding Homelessness And Increase Funding

Means P: Recognize The Social Provision Of Practices Of Rights Defence And Fund Them Properly

Means Q: Recognize The Social Provision Of Citizen Involvement Initiatives And Fund Them Properly

Means R: Promote Cross-Sectorial Cooperation On Homelessness

SOLIDARITY IN THE FACE OF HOMELESSNESS

Raising awareness and mobilizing are necessary to bring about more tolerance and solidarity towards people experiencing homelessness and to fight against homelessness and its causes.

For the complete text, consult our website at www.rapsim.org

RSIQ Contact: **Nathalie Rech**, co-ordinator, (514) 861-0202 or solidarite-itinerance@hotmail.com