

Addictions Foundation of Manitoba (AFM) releases follow-up report on Street Youth - **Still without Shelter: A Description of Issues Faced by Street Youth in Winnipeg in 2007**

Winnipeg ...October 23, 2008 – The AFM released a follow-up report on the characteristics and issues of street youth in Winnipeg. Following a similar study conducted in 2005, which identified key areas of concerns, the 2007 study was conducted to continue to monitor this group of youth. The results have been shared with our key stakeholders and discussions have been on-going on how best to address the issues that are faced by street youth.

With the assistance of Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) and N'dinawe, this study was undertaken with 166 youth, who completed a questionnaire and were interviewed about their family; education and employment; substance use and dependence; mental health; and criminal involvement.

Approximately 60% of the street youth identified as male and the largest proportion (63%) as First Nations or Metis. The average age of females was 18 and for males 19. Similar to 2005, the results indicated that the situation for youth living on the streets remains a life of risky behaviours, mental health issues and substance abuse and/or dependence, as highlighted in the full report.

Adolescents without a fixed address are becoming more and more common on our urban streets, and these adolescents appear to have difficulty “fitting in” and achieving the usual milestones that reflect maturity and the developmental stages of transition into adulthood. What has been found is that street youth have a wide range of difficulties, and a wide range of family backgrounds that may have contributed to these difficulties. To overcome these obstacles requires skills that are beyond their current capabilities, and few are able to take the required steps to develop these skills.

This report offers the opportunity to identify the range of difficulties that these individuals face, with the intention of identifying areas in which we may be able to provide service, and thus, in the long run, assist these individuals in reaching their full potential within supportive environments free from the harms of living on the streets.

Members of the media are invited to attend the report on Street Youth – “Still Without Shelter: A Description of Issues Faced by Street Youth in Winnipeg 2007” on Thursday, October 23rd at 10:30 a.m. at Resource Assistance for Youth (RaY) at 195 Young Street. A youth with street life experience will be in attendance to share their personal story. As well John Borody, CEO – AFM and Kelly Holmes, Executive Director – RaY will also be in attendance.

The study can be obtained at the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba's website: www.afm.mb.ca

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