

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA RELEASE

Homeward Trust Edmonton to *put a cap* on youth homelessness

Edmonton, February 6, 2012 – Tomorrow is **Toque Tuesday** in Canada, and Homeward Trust Edmonton staff, volunteers and community partners will hit the streets to sell toques in support of youth homelessness.

Every year, communities across Canada mark **Toque Tuesday** as part of the national ***Raising the Roof*** campaign – coordinated by the national charity dedicated to finding long-term solutions to homelessness. Homeward Trust Edmonton, alongside campaign partners Crystal Glass and Intact Financial; and local sponsors, SOS Kids and Mac's Convenience Stores, will hold a public media conference at 7:30 AM on the main floor of City Hall to officially kick off the day's events. Hosted by Mike McGuire of CISN FM, the event will include remarks from Mayor Stephen Mandel; Susan McGee, Executive Director, Homeward Trust Edmonton; Ken Franczek, General Manager, Crystal Glass Ltd. and Raising the Roof board member; and Kevin Webster, Regional Business Development Manager, Intact Financial. Additionally, Mac's Convenience Stores will be on site, handing out complimentary coffee and doughnuts to event guests.

"We have been a proud partner in the ***Raising the Roof*** campaign for several years," said Susan McGee, Executive Director of Homeward Trust Edmonton. "Our community has identified ending youth homelessness as a priority, and the funds raised through this campaign are another step towards that goal".

Toques will be sold at a donation of \$10.00 in seven LRT stations and the main floor of City Hall. Eighty per cent of the funds raised will stay in Edmonton to help end youth homelessness, while the additional 20 per cent will support the national Youthworks initiative. **For details on the individual sales locations, please refer to the accompanying background.**

For more information:

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Raising the Roof's National Public Awareness Day Toque Tuesday – February 7, 2012

Media Backgrounder

Toque Tuesday 2012

- This year's theme and call to action for *65,000 acts to support solutions to youth homelessness* relates directly to the estimated number of young people across Canada who are homeless.¹
- Specially designed toques will be sold across Edmonton for a minimum donation of \$10.00 to raise funds for long-term solutions to youth homelessness.
- Representatives from Homeward Trust Edmonton; as well as *Raising the Roof* campaign partners, Intact Insurance and Crystal Glass, will sell toques throughout Edmonton in select LRT stations and City Hall to raise funds for youth homelessness.

Media Conference

- A media conference will be held on the main floor of City Hall from 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM.
- Mayor Stephen Mandel, City of Edmonton; Susan McGee, Executive Director, Homeward Trust Edmonton; Ken Franczek, General Manager, Crystal Glass and Raising the Roof board member; and Kevin Webster, Regional Business Development Manager, Intact Financial, will speak at the media launch at 8:00 AM, and be available for media interviews and photo opportunities from 8:25 AM – 9:00 AM.
- Local sponsor, Mac's Convenience Stores, will be on site to hand out complimentary doughnuts and coffee to event guests.

¹ As reported in Raising the Roof's national report Youth Homelessness in Canada: The Road to Solutions, published June 2009.

Sales Locations

Toques will be sold at the following times and locations:

6:30 AM – 9:30 AM:

1. Churchill Station
2. Bay/Enterprise Square
3. Central Station
4. Corona Station
5. Grandin Station
6. Southgate Station

7:30 – 4:45 AM:

1. City Room, City Hall

3:30 PM – 6:30 PM

1. Churchill Station
2. Bay/Enterprise Square
3. Central Station
4. Corona Station
5. Grandin Station
6. Southgate Station
7. Century Park Station

Raising the Roof National Campaign

- 2011/2012 marks the 15th anniversary of the Toque Campaign. The campaign runs from November 2011 to the end of February 2012.
- Last year, **Raising the Roof** achieved the goal of selling 40,000 toques across Canada. This year, the goal is to sell 50,000 toques.
- The 2012 Toque Campaign national partners are: Intact Financial Corporation & Canadian Traffic Network. The regional partner is Crystal Glass Ltd.

Proceeds

- Since 1997 toque sales have enabled **Raising the Roof** to grant over \$3 million to support the work of 145 community agencies serving the homeless across Canada. Homeward Trust Edmonton is one of these agencies.
- Eighty per cent of the net proceeds raised through toque sales in Edmonton will help fund local solutions to youth homelessness. The remaining 20 per cent will fund **Raising the Roof's** Youthworks initiative, aimed at breaking the cycle of youth homelessness.

Facts about youth homelessness in Edmonton¹

- According to the 2010 Homeless Count, 166 homeless youth were observed (age 0-16), which accounts for 7 per cent of the total 2,421 homeless counted.
- This number included 43 non-dependent youth (individuals less than 17 years of age without a caregiver) and 123 dependent youth (individuals less than 17 years of age with a caregiver).
- Of the 43 youth recorded without a caregiver, 33 were considered 'absolute homeless' (non-sheltered) and 10 were considered 'sheltered homeless.'
- 71 families were included in the count, comprising 54 single parent families and 17 (dual or more) caregiver families.
- Of the 71 families recorded, 54 per cent were considered 'absolute homeless' and 43 per cent were considered 'sheltered homeless'.
- These figures do not reflect the 'hidden homeless': those staying with friends or relatives (i.e., "couch surfers").

¹ As reported in Homeward Trust Edmonton's 2010 Homeless Count, published November 2010

Facts about youth homelessness in Canada¹

1) Canadian youth are not homeless by choice

- Most homeless youth come from unstable housing situations and unsafe family or guardian circumstances.
- 68% of the youth interviewed had previously been in foster care, or in group home placements.
- Most youth end up homeless because of family related issues such as poverty, violence, physical, psychological and sexual abuse, sexual and gender identity.
- 63% of the youth interviewed said they grew up in a family with unstable housing.
- 30% reported that their family had a low income.

2) Investing in solutions to youth homelessness makes social and economic sense

- Without a comprehensive plan to address youth homelessness, the numbers of street-involved youth will continue to accelerate, and associated health care, criminal justice, social services and emergency shelter costs will continue to grow.
- It costs approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 per year to keep a youth in the shelter system.
- The cost of keeping a youth in detention is about \$100,000 a year.
- Providing youth with educational and employment training and opportunities, stable, secure housing and essential life skills – helps them along the positive path towards independence and self-sufficiency as a contributing member of society.

¹ As reported in Raising the Roof's national report Youth Homelessness in Canada: The Road to Solutions, published June 2009.

About Raising the Roof

Raising the Roof is a national Canadian charity focused on long-term solutions to homelessness. The charity funds local, grass-roots agencies working to alleviate homelessness in their communities; build awareness among Canadians about the true nature of homelessness today and educate them about how to prevent it in the future; and build partnerships by giving people, corporations and organizations the opportunity to participate in solutions.

About Homeward Trust Edmonton

Homeward Trust Edmonton is a not for profit organization that uses a community-based approach toward the goal of ending homelessness in Edmonton. Our primary role is to coordinate responses to housing needs by working together with local agencies and all orders of government.

Since 2001, we have:

- Provided over \$100 million in funding to 80 capital and 75 support projects
- Created over 1,900 new housing units
- Housed over 1,500 individuals through the housing first program

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