

# THE CHALLENGE

## At least 600 of Hamilton's Youth Are Street-Involved or Homeless Right Now

Wesley Urban Ministries has undertaken a transitional housing program specifically designed for street-involved and homeless youth in Hamilton. **This initiative will transform the lives of Hamilton's street youth.**

"At least 600 of Hamilton's youth are street-involved or homeless", the 2005 Addressing the Needs of Street-Involved and Homeless Youth in Hamilton report stated. The report, authored by the Social Planning and Research Council also identified that "abuse, physical and mental health, sex, education, substance use and systems involvement" are crucial issues faced by this population.

While there have traditionally been drop-in services, emergency shelter and meal programs to serve street-involved and homeless youth in Hamilton, one of the key recommendations in this comprehensive report shows a need **"to increase the range of transitional housing options for street-involved youth who require a variety of housing options."**

"In 2006, almost 4,000 different individuals stayed at an emergency shelter" according to On Any Given Night: Measuring Homelessness in Hamilton, 2007 Edition, and "This represents a 30% increase in shelter usage between 2005 and 2006." Further research shows that the number of children, women, and men accessing Hamilton's emergency shelters has more than doubled since 1995. One way to address this trend and work to decrease homelessness is to invest in the lives of at-risk youth and work to create individual well-being, independence and housing stability for today and the future.

## At the Wesley Youth Housing Program, we're investing in the future of Hamilton's youth.



"The most contributing factors to youth homelessness or street-involvement are the lack of income and the lack of affordable housing."