FACTUM

Torontonians Believe Youth Homelessness Should Be a Priority for the Next Administration

More than four in five Torontonians want action on both the root causes of youth homelessness and stable, supported housing for young people

Toronto, Canada, October 13, 2026 — With municipal elections on the horizon, Toronto residents agree that youth homelessness should be a priority for the next administration, according to an Ipsos survey commissioned by the Youth Homelessness Sector Strategy Group. More than eight in ten say it's either a top priority (41%) or moderate priority (44%) for the next Mayor and City Council to address the root causes of youth homelessness in Toronto, while a similar proportion (85%) say it is a priority to get young people housed with the support they need to stay housed (Top priority: 36%/Moderate priority: 46%).

Concern About Youth Homelessness Extends to the Political Arena

Almost nine in ten (88%) Torontonians are concerned about youth homelessness in Toronto specifically (Very: 44%/Somewhat: 44%), and two-thirds (66%) say they would either be much more likely (29%) or somewhat more likely (38%) to support a candidate for Mayor or City Council who makes reducing youth homelessness a key priority.

Torontonians Believe Youth Homelessness Can Be Prevented with Targeted Interventions

Many Toronto residents believe that youth homelessness can be addressed through policy and service interventions, with four in five (84%) agreeing that youth homelessness can be prevented through targeted policies and support to those most at risk (Strongly: 24%/Somewhat: 60%). Interest in a dedicated approach to youth homelessness is high. More than nine in ten residents (Strongly: 44%/Somewhat: 50%) support the development of a youth homelessness strategy for Toronto. In addition, 88% agree that youth homelessness is distinct from adult homelessness and therefore requires specific attention and solutions (Strongly: 30%/Somewhat: 58%).

Support Extends to a Range of Youth-Focused Approaches

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Support is not limited to the concept of a youth homelessness strategy itself, which has strong support (93% support — Strongly: 44%/Somewhat: 50%). Residents also express support for a range of related government actions, including improving employment and job training opportunities (95% support — Strongly: 51%/Somewhat: 44%), strengthening school-based prevention programs (94% support — Strongly: 43%/Somewhat: 50%), expanding supportive housing for youth that helps them transition towards independent living (93% support — Strongly: 42%/Somewhat: 51%), expanding mental health and addiction services for youth (92% support — Strongly: 49%/Somewhat: 43%), and expanding family mediation and family support services (92% support — Strongly: 37%/Somewhat: 55%).

Residents Favor Addressing Both Causes and Consequences

When considering approaches to addressing youth homelessness, Toronto residents tend to favour a balance between prevention and direct support. Nearly eight in ten (79%) say initiatives should include an equal mix of helping young people currently experiencing homelessness and preventing others from becoming homeless in the first place.

About the Study

These are the findings of an Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of Covenant House and the Youth Homelessness Sector Strategy Group that was fielded between August 27 and September 1, 2026. A total of n=1000 Toronto residents aged 18+ participated in the survey, which was fielded via the Ipsos' panel. Quotas and weighting were used to ensure the sample's composition reflects that of the Toronto population according to census parameters. This survey has a credibility interval of +/- 3.8 per cent, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all Toronto residents 18+ been surveyed. Credibility intervals are wider among subsets of the population.

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