

What is Herizons?

YWCA Halifax's **Herizons** Housing Program is a supportive affordable housing program for single mothers attending post-secondary, serving a maximum of 5 women-led families. Within a continuum of support, single mothers at **Herizons** have access to on-site 'after-hours' child minding (**subject to exam time**), a supportive culture of peers, 24-hour emergency staff availability, advocacy, support, service navigation and referral, and links to parenting resource and support programs.

As a result of receiving transitional, supportive housing at **Herizons**, program participants will achieve economic independence and long-term housing security. **Herizons** Housing Program provides an immediate relief to homelessness, while increasing capacity for the mid and long-term prevention of homelessness among single mothers, their children, and their children's children.

What needs does Herizons address?

- Family homelessness is one of the fastest growing areas of homelessness. It can be estimated that 80% of homeless families are led by single mothers. Access to education, housing, child care and support are recognized as short and long term solutions to family homelessness.
- Insufficient income is a major cause of homelessness. 67.3% of single-mothers in NS were living below the low-income cut offs.
- Nova Scotia has the highest proportion of single parent families in Canada.
- A key long-term solution for a single mother to reduce the risk of homelessness for her family is to attend university, and increase her earning potential.
- There are significant barriers to single mothers attending university, and only 10% of single mothers have completed university. Halifax has the highest university tuition in Canada. University-run student family housing, when it is available, is out of reach, with the average price of a 2 bedroom in Halifax at \$899 monthly.
- While a student, single mothers in HRM are likely to experience a budget deficit of \$317-473 monthly, and are therefore very likely to be at a high risk of homelessness throughout university.
- Recent statistics show that there were 228 single parents attending university who applied for student assistance in HRM, of which one can estimate that there are 189 are single mothers attending university in Halifax.

Herizons - a supportive transitional housing program for homeless and at-risk single mothers pursuing post-secondary education - represents an immediate alleviation of homelessness, and provides the support to prevent homelessness within the immediate family unit and successive generations.

YWCA Halifax is a women's organization that provides vital services to women and young women at critical turning points in their lives. YWCA Halifax Programs enable families to thrive. Serving Halifax since 1874, the YWCA depends on charitable donations to fund its programs.