

Comprehensive Health Education Workers Project: Listening to Homeless and Street-Involved SGM Youth in Alberta



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Participants ranged in age from 15 to 29 ($M = 20.65$ years)

66% were non-white or of mixed ethnicity

81% self-identified as cisgender; 19% as gender minorities

Sexual orientation varied: most common was gay (25%) and bisexual (22%); 16% were heterosexual

Only half (50%) reported living in a safe environment

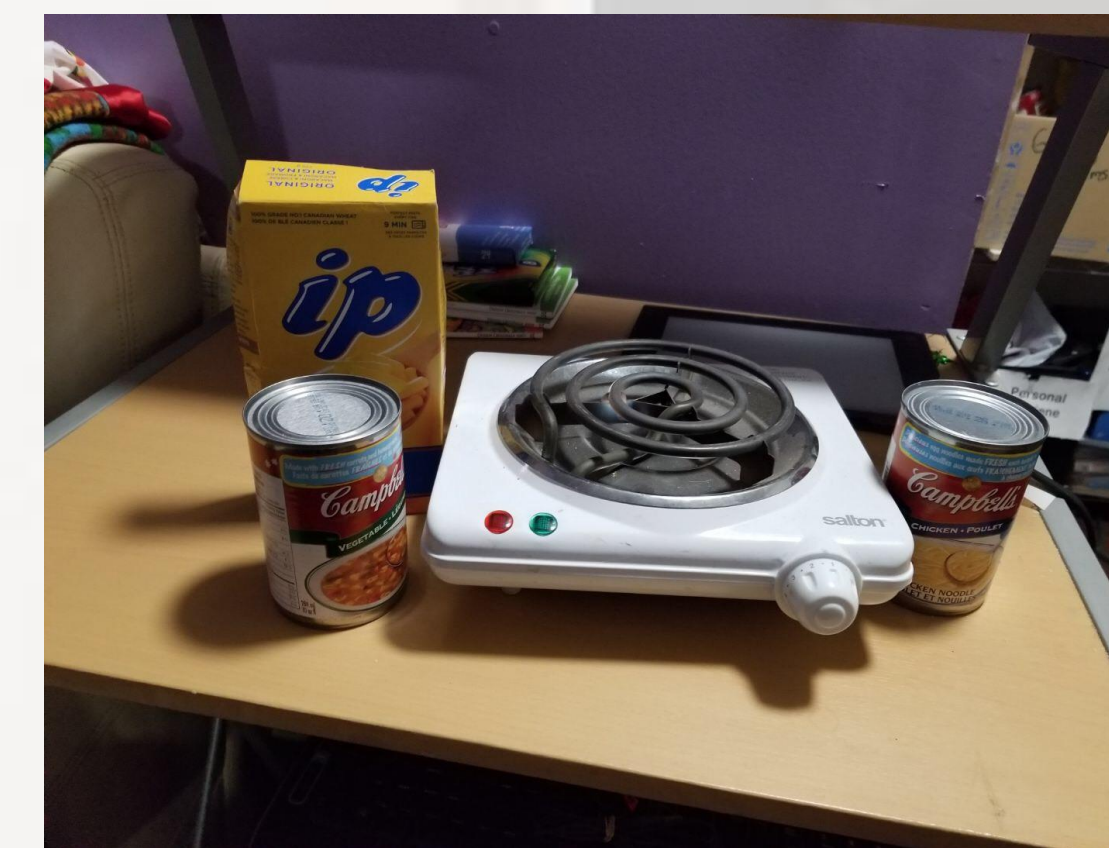
Most reported feeling sad or depressed often (47%) or always (25%) and experiencing anxiety often (53%) or always (25%)

Most reported hating themselves often (34%) or always (28%)

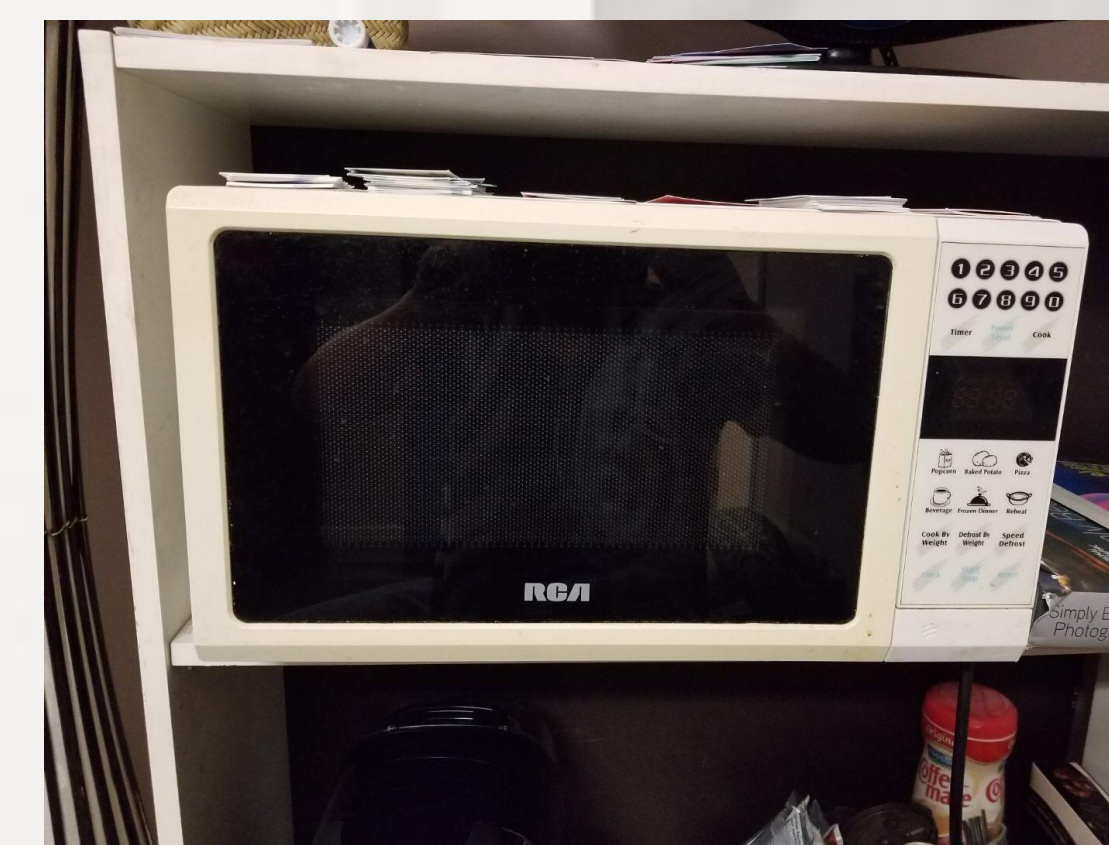
Suicidal ideation is common, with participants occasionally (38%), often (25%), or always (6%) thinking about taking their own lives

Echoing these points, when asked whether they currently have mental health concerns they need help with, most strongly agreed (22%) or agreed (53%)

However, regarding having access to a mental health professional, 41% disagreed, while 6% strongly disagreed



CHEW Project Kitchen



Microwave and furniture courtesy of neighbourhood dumpsters



Only 41% of participants reported having daily access to clean drinking water



As an emerging escape trend, some youth are drinking hand sanitizer and/or rubbing alcohol



Winter footwear on a -40°C day

38% agreed and 28% strongly agreed with the statement "I sometimes do things I don't want to do to survive"

Participants commonly engaged in sex work:

When asked how often their sexual encounters were in exchange for money, 25% indicated rarely, 9% occasionally, 16% often, & 9% always

When asked how often their sexual encounters were in exchange for a place to sleep, 22% said rarely, 13% occasionally, 25% often, & 6% always

Sexually transmitted infection (STI) rates were quite high:

28% reported being diagnosed with syphilis

41% with gonorrhea

56% with chlamydia

13% with genital warts

1 participant reported being HIV-positive

38% strongly agreed and 22% agreed that they were dealing with substance use

22% strongly agreed and 47% agreed that they get drunk to forget their problems. Similarly, 34% strongly agreed and 34% agreed that they get high to forget their problems

Only 38% reported being able to have a shower daily. Even fewer (28%) have regular access to laundry facilities (19% only able to wash their clothes once a month and 31% < once per month)

Most reported going to bed hungry often (47%) or always (6%)