



**HOMELESS IN KENORA**

**Volume IX**

**Student Stories**

**2016**

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[www.makingkenorahome.ca](http://www.makingkenorahome.ca)

# Homeless in Kenora: Education and Housing



**Stories of Students and Their  
Journey to Find Housing in Kenora**

**Volume IX**



“When talking with student counsellors in the North about students attending College in Kenora they were very enthusiastic. The only issue we encountered time and time again was the lack of housing. Figuring out how to get students housing will be beneficial in getting students their education.”

Local College Education Counsellor

## Recommendations for Student Housing

### Campus Housing



Schools with campus housing offer recruitment advantage . Research indicates that students living on-campus are more involved in college life, have a lower drop out rate and perform at higher academic level than off-campus students.

### Student Boarding Homes



Encourage boarding opportunities for students amongst private citizens. With local aging population this is an income opportunity for retired persons who are maintaining family homes.

### Tiny Homes



Zoning changes have increased opportunities for construction of separate tiny homes also known as “garden” or “granny” suites.

### Private Rental Developments

Single room occupancy units are scarce as are three bedroom units. In conjunction with two bedroom units, there is demand for all three sizes of units in the private market.



## Benefits Of Affordable Housing for students

- ◆ Students with higher success in school leads to a more employable workforce
- ◆ More students from out of town means more patrons for business owners
- ◆ Helps create a more diversified community
- ◆ More locally educated students will reverse regional youth out-migration
- ◆ Supports long-term community success

## Education and Housing

Kenora has two post-secondary educational institutes. Unfortunately, the community struggles with a scarcity of affordable housing. For students coming into Kenora to access education, finding housing is a challenge which sometimes kills the dream of a better life through education. This booklet contains student stories of the importance of their education and their struggle for shelter.

The issue is also about Kenora's future. Local post secondary education increases youth retention within our region, develops our labour force and is an industry within itself. When students are unable to secure housing, they leave for other facilities or give up trying. In 2007, Making Kenora Home identified the need for student housing and recommended the use of vacant buildings including warehouses, hotels and schools as residential infill.

It is time for us to support the development of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for all within Kenora.



*Become a contributing community member*

Family

**Freedom**

*Choice*

*I want to live and work locally*

*Expand my worldview*

**THIS IS OUR WHY**

*Provide a better life for future generations*

**Meaningful Lives**

For the career I am passionate about.

*To Help Others*

**For a better future**

**Opportunity**

**2** Finding an affordable place to rent is near impossible. My family and I live in an area reserve and we sometimes have to stay at a hotel in town so we can go to school. It is expensive and hard with kids, but what are you going to do?



**3** The only way we got our apartment was by knowing the people who lived in it prior. Otherwise I don't know what we would've done. We just were lucky that way .



**“Housing is always a major issue, when people move to a town or city. Some students resort to staying in a hotel, for a few days as they sort out housing options. Linking housing options will minimize student drop outs.” -NNEC- Nelson**

# What was your experience like looking for housing?

**1** It was really was hard though. I mean I have a very well paid job that provided for my boys and me as well. I also have our child tax income. I am able to manage paying our bills and rent on time. But once I inspected the place, met with the landlords made conversation and it sounded like we had a good shot. It sounded like we would have no problems they'd ask me, "so it's just you renting the place?" I'd let them know that it was my boys and I. As soon as they'd find



out I have children their attitudes and conversation were cut short. They made it obvious I wouldn't be chosen. It even got to the point where I brought in my first and last's rent and made verbal confirmation that utilities could be set up that very day. Oh man, it was super hard. And the

worst was that it was crooked landlords who found us an opportunity ... living in a crappy house with a high rent expense...like 1300 for a crappy 2 bedroom plus cost of utilities. When I need things fixed around the house the landlord came and fixed it with DUCT TAPE. So I had my brother come and do my repairs, properly.



# Why is Education Important to You?

The last course I signed up for was diabetes support worker. It was because I wanted to higher my education in the medical field (I am a personal support worker) also just to gain as much knowledge as I can to get a better life. Working minimum wage jobs in this town is hard due to cost of living and with the right credentials I could achieve getting a better job to provide and support my family.

—being a father and cooking. I know it is tough and it sucks with the housing situation but we will make it through and have a

**My parents and grandparents didn't have an opportunity for higher education. I talked with my Grandma. She said she was really proud of me for getting an education because she always wanted one. It is important to blaze new trails for my family and I am happy I was one**

# Reality

## The Students

Adult students may be young or old, male or female, single or partnered, childless or with children. What defines them is their determination to obtain an education. Most are low-income and do not have savings or assets. They seldom have private transportation.



## The Housing

Single students looking to study without the distraction of roommates are looking at an average market rent of \$680 (not including utilities). In the private market Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reports that there are 16 bachelor units and 146 one bedroom apartments in Kenora. The average market rent in Kenora for a two bedroom apartment is \$853 (utilities not included) and the availability rate is 1.1%. Student tenants often come without credit histories or references because of a lack of independent living experience. There are few advertised apartments and housing is usually found through personal connections.



## The Money

Most students fund their educations through a combination of part time work and Ontario Student Assistance Program Loans. The maximum a single student may borrow is \$365.00 weekly during the school year and this must cover all tuition, books, mandatory fees, living costs and transportation. The family maximum is \$565.00. It is a myth that all aboriginal students get free education. First Nations have limited funds for post secondary education.



Ontario has the highest tuition fees for post secondary education (\$7,539 average annually) in Canada. CUDO reports that books & supplies range from \$800-\$2000. Ancillary fees and other related school expenses add \$4,007 to the cost per year.

Living Expenses = Whatever Student Can Scrounge

School Costs  
\$12,946



Maximum OSAP  
\$13,140

Single Student Income & School Cost