

Let's Talk Housing and Homelessness

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What I'm Going to Talk About...

- *A Home for All*
- Core Housing Need
- Defining Homelessness
- 2018 Point in Time Count
- Niagara's Response

A HOME FOR ALL

NIAGARA'S 10-YEAR HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN

Vision and Mission

Vision: *A Home for All*

Mission: *Niagara Region and its community partners aspire to meet the diverse housing needs of individuals and families through leadership and collaboration, by building on existing community assets and by empowering residents.*

4 Goals of the Action Plan

Goal 1 – House people who do not have a home

Goal 2 – Help people find and retain their home

Goal 3 – Increase opportunities and options across the housing continuum

Goal 4 – Build capacity and improving the effectiveness of the housing system

“A Home for All” Working Groups



Timeline

Immediate
Activities

Short-Term
Activities

Mid-Term
Activities

Long-Term
Activities

2013

2014

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

2023

Community Consultation
Process

Develop the Action Plan

Council Approval of
Action Plan

Ministry Approval of
Action Plan

Homelessness
Services System
Review

Develop A Home for All
Task Force

A Home for All Working
Groups

5-Year Review

Affordable Housing
Strategy Steering
Committee

Theory of
Change
- Outcomes
- Indicators



CORE HOUSING NEED (CENSUS 2016)

What is Core Housing Need?

A household is said to be in 'core housing need' if its housing falls below at least one of the *adequacy, affordability* or *suitability* standards and it would have to spend 30% or more of its total before-tax income in rent. Households in core housing need are at risk of homelessness.

Notes:

[1] Unless otherwise noted, all of the following tables use Census 2016 data

[2] The local housing market has significantly changed since the 2016 census

Three Housing Standards

Suitability	Housing that is too small for the size of the household	5.4% of households in core housing need*
Adequacy	Housing that needs significant repair	13.1% of households in core housing need*
Affordability	Paying more than 30% of income to shelter costs	95.3% of households in core housing need*

Some households experience more than one of these challenges.

* *Statistics are calculated for the Niagara region*

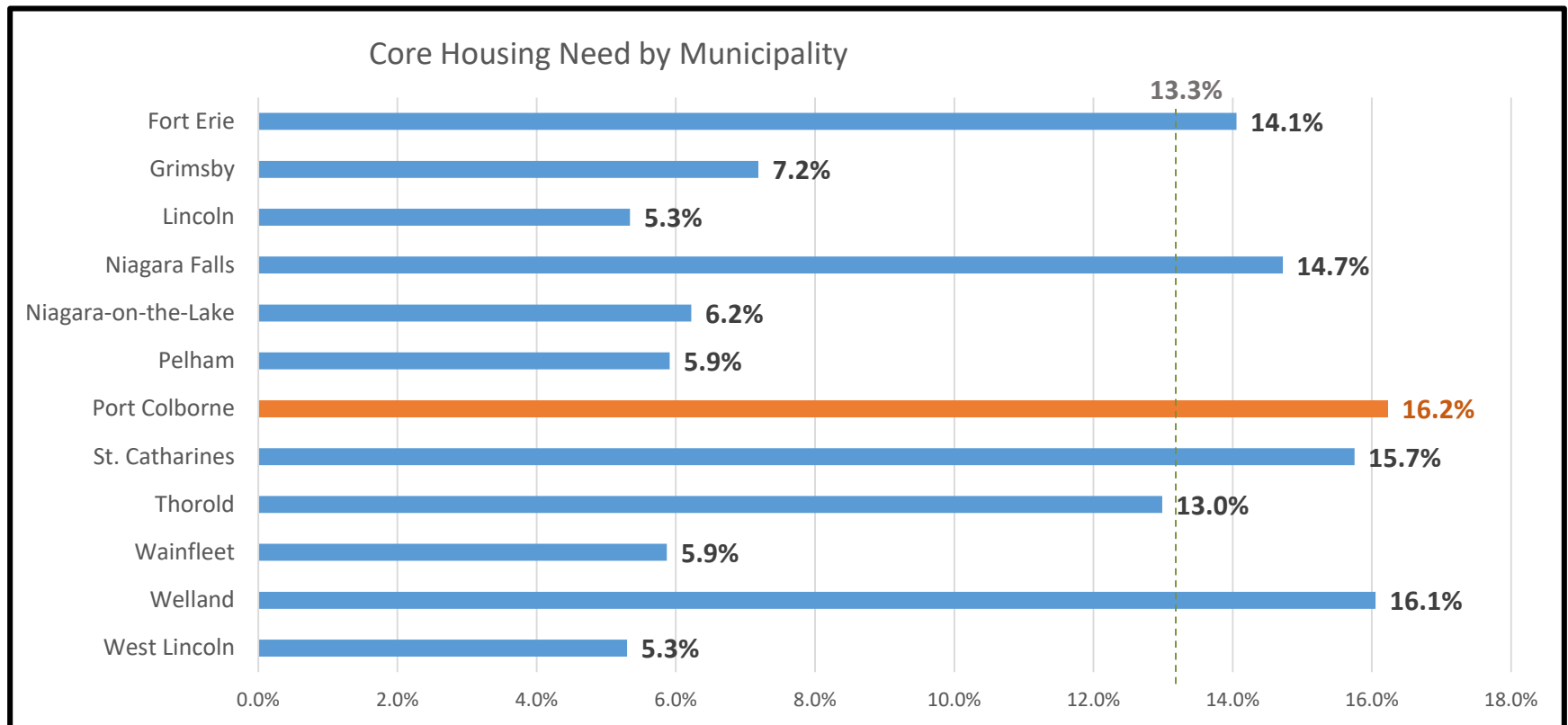
2018 Rental Market in Port Colborne (from CMHC market data)

- Vacancy rates 0% or unknown
- Average rents for 1-bedroom units increased by \$157 since 2017

Unit Type	Vacancy Rate (2018)	Average Rent (2018)
Bachelor	unknown	unknown
1 Bedroom	0%	\$845
2 Bedroom	unknown	\$954
3+ Bedroom	unknown	\$1,068
Total	unknown	\$928

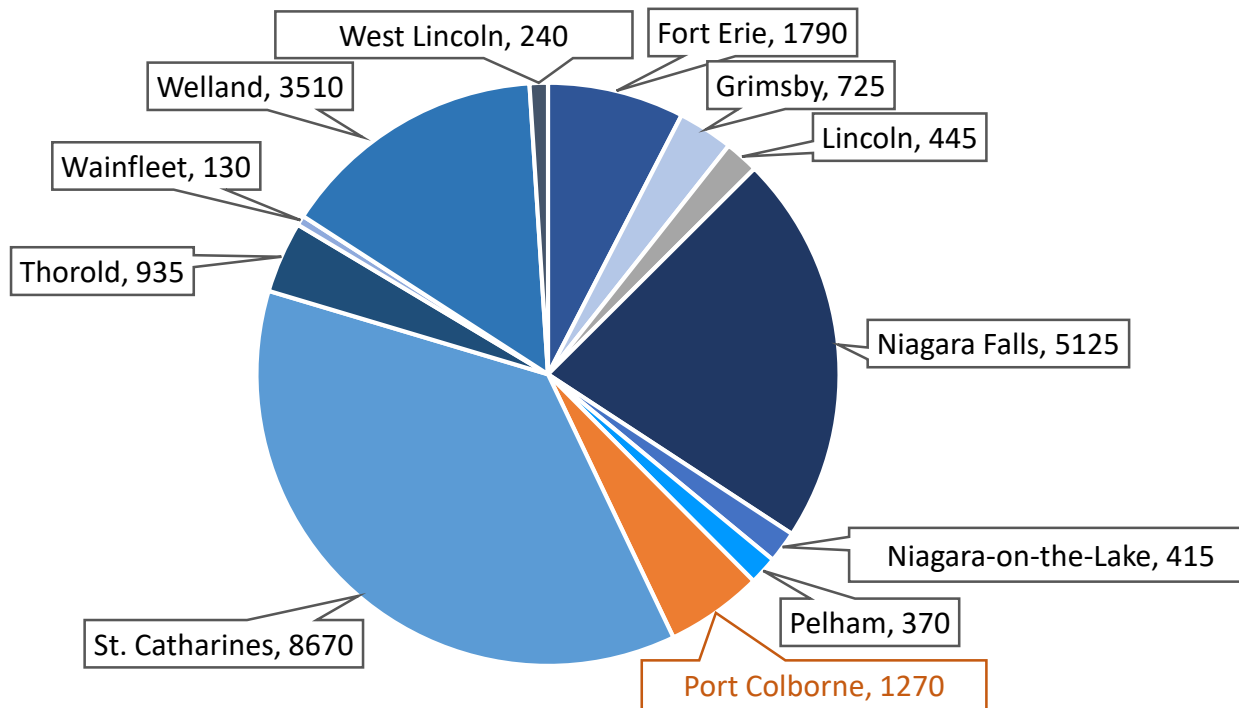
- Rent increases outpacing income increases
- Current asking prices are higher than average rent

Port Colborne has a Higher Rate of Core Housing Need than all other Local Municipalities



5.4% of Households in Core Housing Need in the Region Live in Port Colborne

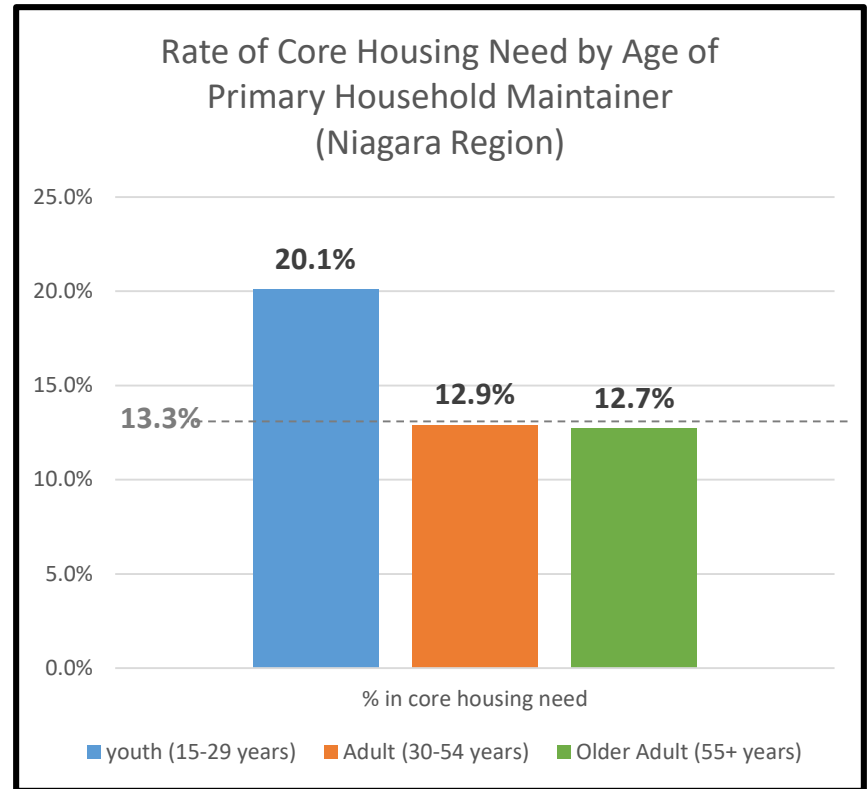
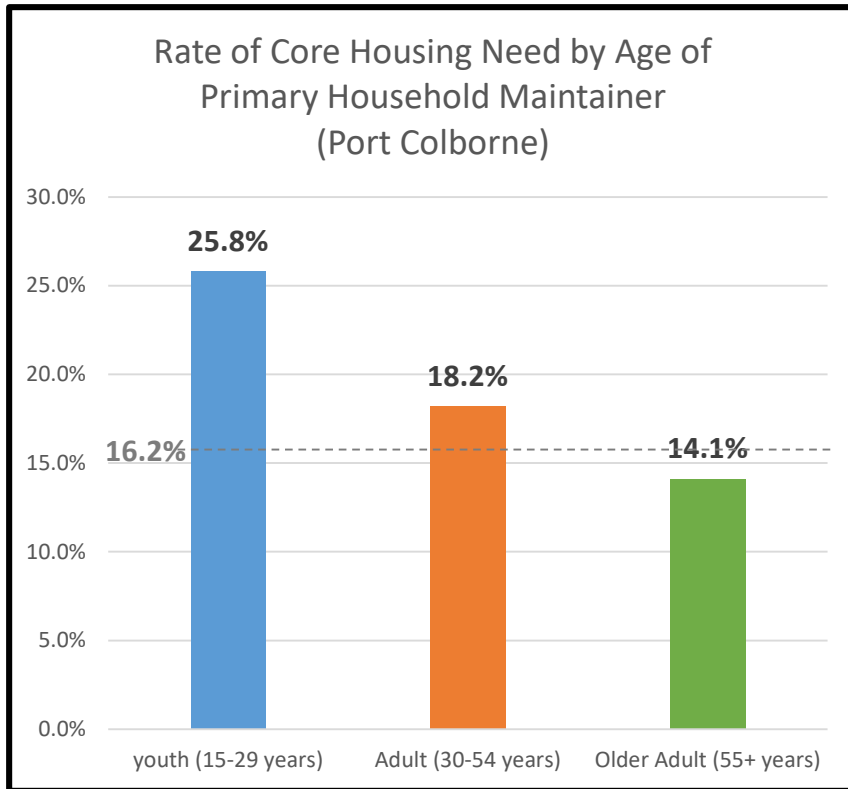
Number of Households in Core Need by Local Municipality



Core Housing Need is More Common Among Lower Income Households

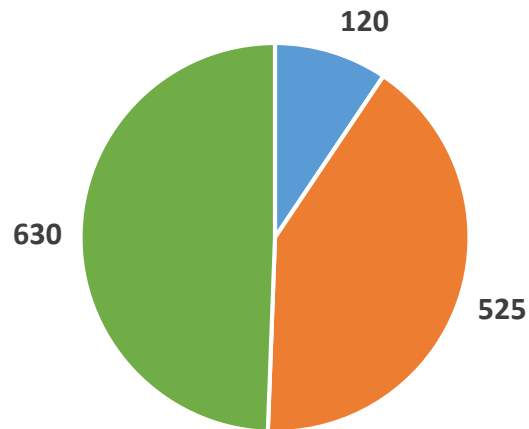
% of Households in Core Need by Income		
After Tax Income	Port Colborne	Niagara Region
below \$21,172	81.7%	78.6%
\$21,172 to \$34,328	41.9%	42.9%
\$34,329 to \$46,836	9.7%	12.1%
\$46,837 to \$60,030	0%	0.9%

The Rate of Core Housing Need is Highest for Youth Households (Age 15-29)



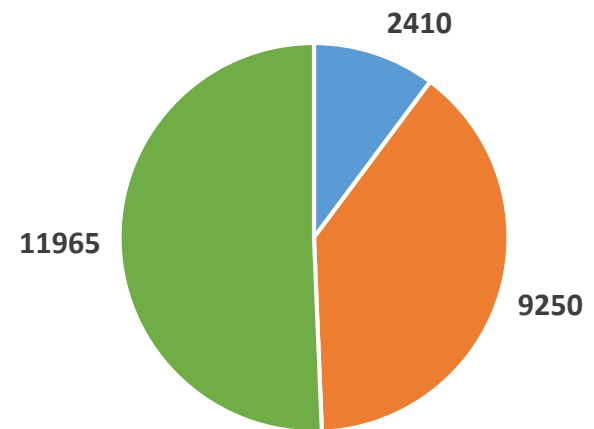
However, Youth Represent a Smaller Number of Households in Core Need than Adults or Older Adults

Number of Households in Core Housing Need by Age of Primary Household Maintainer (Port Colborne)



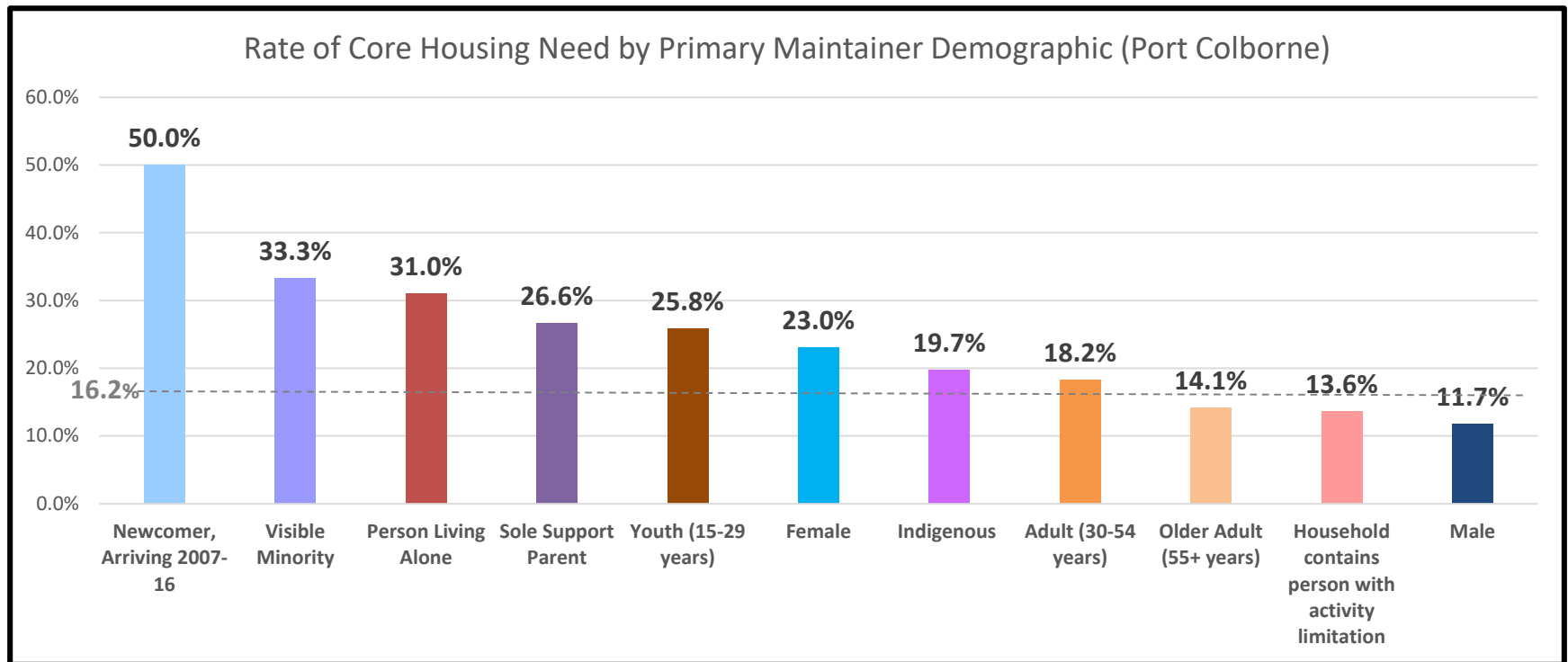
- youth (15-29 years)
- Adult (30-54 years)
- Older Adult (55+ years)

Number of Households in Core Housing Need by Age of Primary Household Maintainer (Niagara Region)



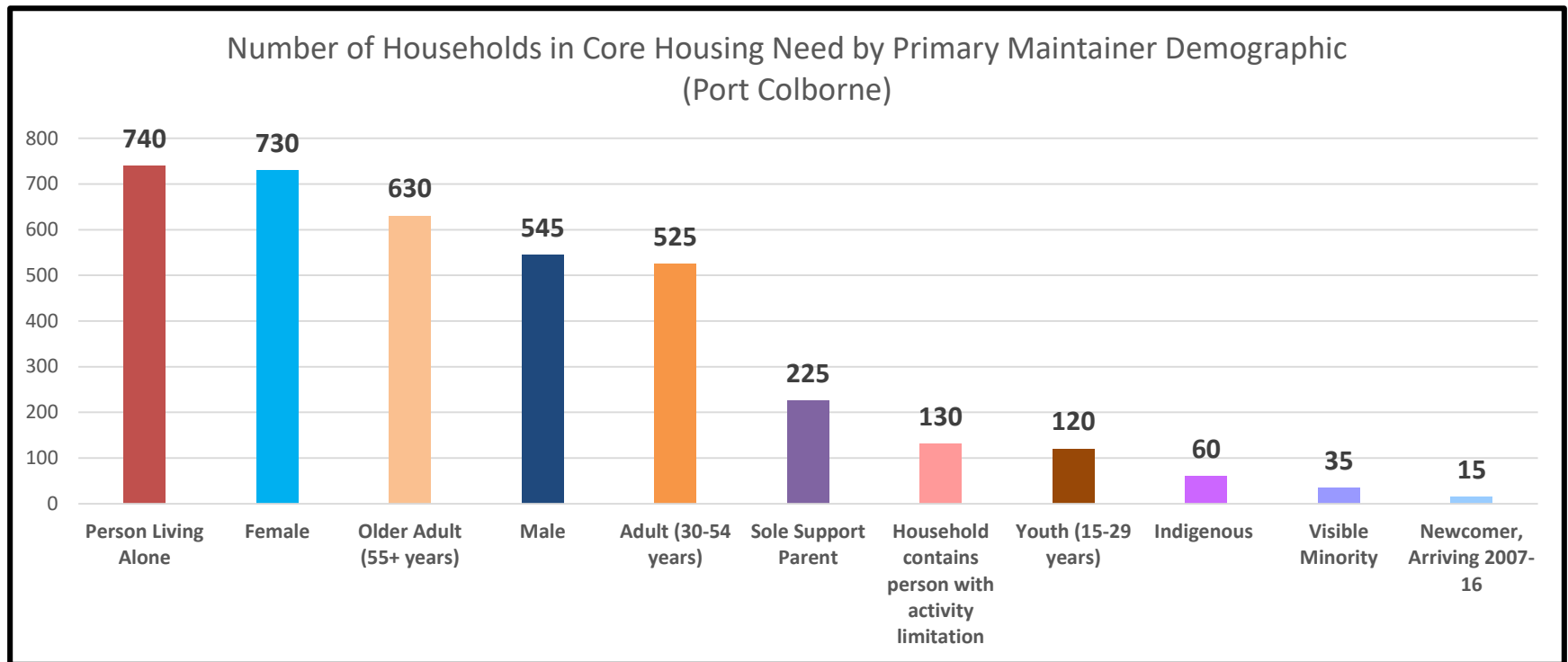
- youth (15-29 years)
- Adult (30-54 years)
- Older Adult (55+ years)

Core Housing Need Disproportionately Affects Some Groups*



*Note that a household may belong to more than one category

A larger proportion of those in Core Housing Need Live Alone (59%) and/or are Female (58%)*



*Note that a household may belong to more than one category

DEFINING HOMELESSNESS

Canadian Definition of Homelessness*

- Homelessness describes the situation of an individual, family or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.
- It is the result of systemic or societal barriers, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, the individual/household's financial, mental, cognitive, behavioural or physical challenges, and/or racism and discrimination.
- Most people do not choose to be homeless, and the experience is generally negative, unpleasant, unhealthy, unsafe, stressful and distressing.

*Gaetz, S.; Barr, C.; Friesen, A.; Harris, B.; Hill, C.; Kovacs-Burns, K.; Pauly, B.; Pearce, B.; Turner, A.; Marsolais, A. (2012) *Canadian Definition of Homelessness*. Toronto: Canadian Observatory on Homelessness Press.

Unsheltered

- People living in public or private spaces without consent or contract
 - Parks
 - Vacant buildings
- People living in places not intended for permanent human habitation
 - Cars
 - Garages
 - Tents

Emergency Sheltered

- Those accessing emergency shelter and system supports, generally provided at no cost or minimal cost to the user
 - Emergency shelter
 - Violence against women (VAW) shelter

Provisionally Accommodated

- Those accessing temporary housing provided by government or non-profit sector, or who have made temporary arrangements for short-term accommodation
 - Transitional housing
 - Couch surfing
 - Motel
 - Rooming house
 - Institutional care

HOMELESSNESS (2018 POINT IN TIME COUNT)

What is a Point-in-Time Count?

- Provides a snapshot of homelessness at a single point in time
- There are two elements to a Count:
 - Homeless Enumeration: A count of individuals experiencing homelessness in Niagara at a given time
 - Surveys: Information on the demographics, experience, and service needs of Niagara's homeless population (self-identified)

Volunteer Recruitment and Participation

 **Niagara Region**
March 6 at 1:35pm · 🌐

Volunteers needed to help us conduct a point-in-time count of homelessness in Niagara.



Niagara Counts - Volunteers Wanted
Over 60 communities across Canada will be conducting Point-in-Time Counts providing a snapshot of homelessness at a given time. This involves counting and surveying those in our community who experience homelessness.

NIAGARAREGION.CA [Learn More](#)

- 87 volunteers supported the Count as trained volunteer surveyors and base site volunteers
- Training: methodology, survey administration, logistics, safety

Port Colborne Enumeration

- Guild Hall Out of the Cold Meal
- Niagara Mobile Outreach (3 Stops)

Port Colborne in the 2018 Count

Of 408 respondents...

- 5 (1.2%) identified Port Colborne as their home community
- 109 (26.7%) identified the Niagara region or more than one local municipality as their home community
- 25 (6.1%) didn't know
- 9 (2.2%) declined to answer

Overnight Location – March 27th, 2018

WHERE ARE YOU STAYING TONIGHT?

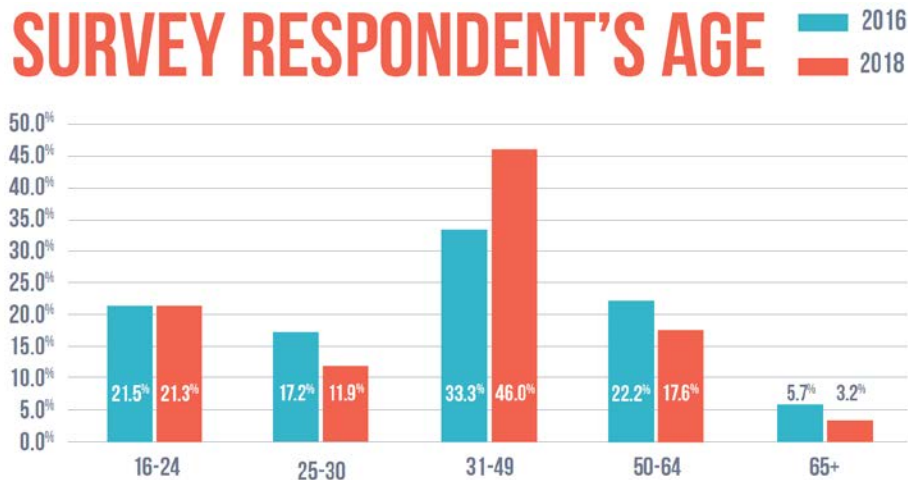


Of 408 respondents:

- 14 (3%) were Unsheltered
- 226 (55%) were Emergency Sheltered
- 162 (40%) were Provisionally Accommodated

Age Characteristics

SURVEY RESPONDENT'S AGE

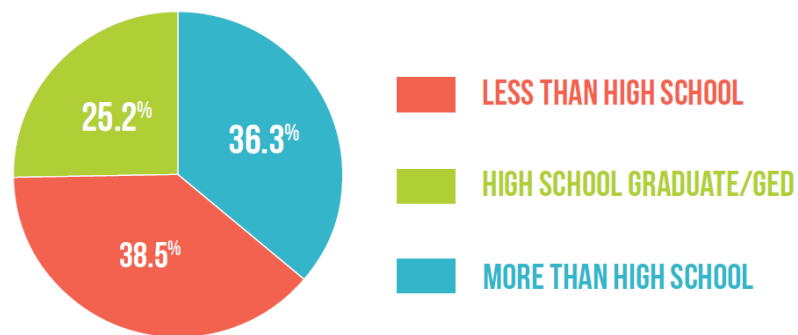


- More than 1 in 5 respondents (21.3%) were youth aged 16-24 years, which was similar to the proportion of youth among 2016 respondents.
- The 2018 respondent population was made up of proportionately fewer people in every age group than in 2016, except for the 31-49 year olds

Educational Attainment

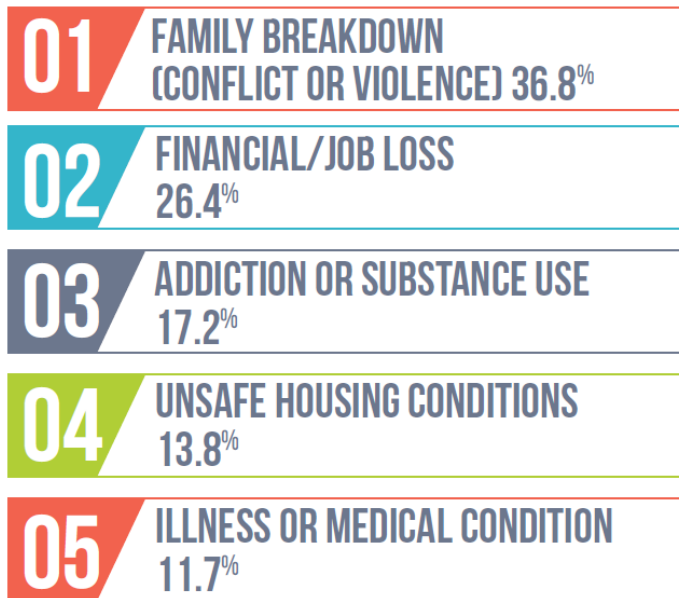
- The rate of having less than a high school education is more than twice that of the general Niagara population (18.2%, 2016 Census)

RESPONDENT'S HIGHEST EDUCATION



Top 5 Reasons for Housing Loss

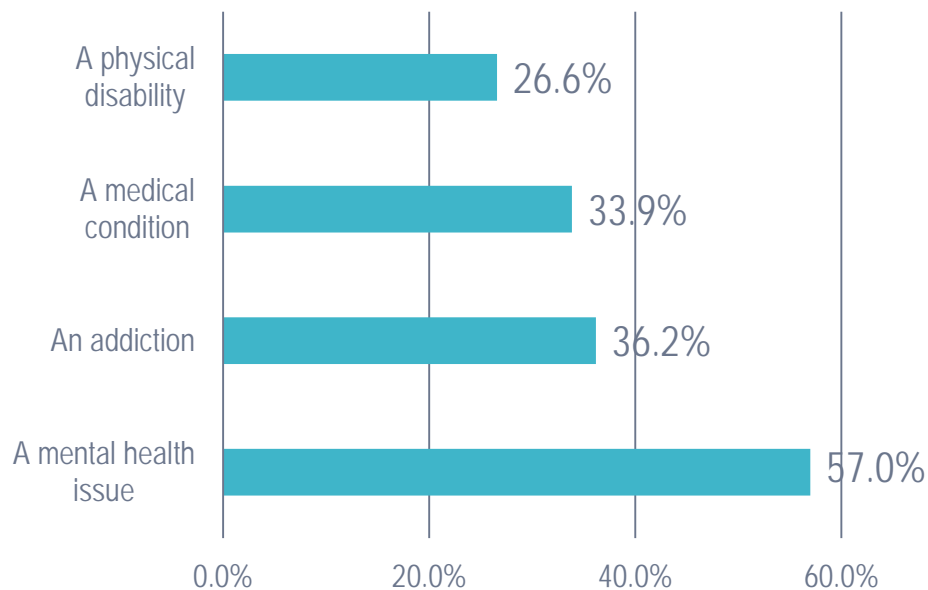
TOP FIVE REASONS FOR MOST RECENT HOUSING LOSS:



- Nearly 4 out of 5 respondents (78.4%) indicated their source of income as welfare/social assistance and/or disability benefit.
- Almost 80% of respondents indicated that rents being too high and/or a low income were challenges for them when trying to find housing.

Health

RESPONDENTS SELF-IDENTIFIED AS HAVING:



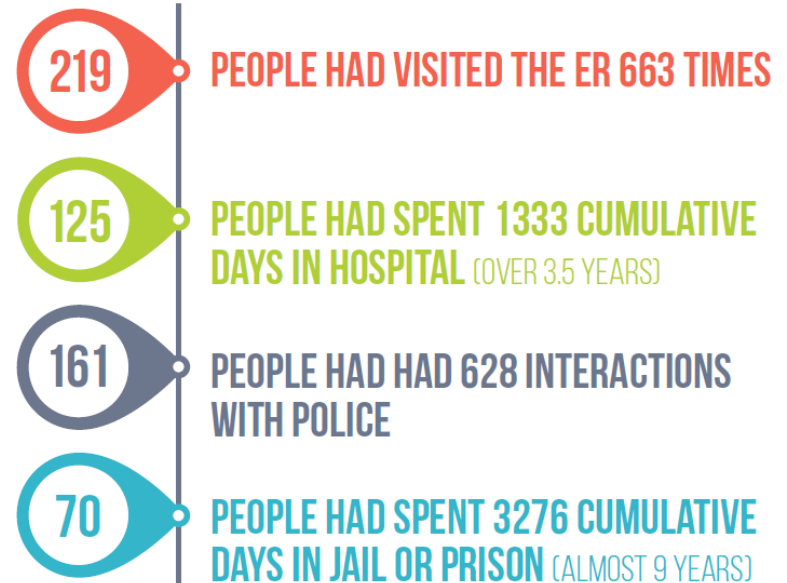
Self-reported need for services related to:

- Mental health (54.3% of respondents)
- Addiction or substance use (29.2%)
- Serious or ongoing medical condition (26.9%)
- Physical disability (19.4%)
- Learning disability (19.1%)
- Culture (12.4%)
- Brain injury (8.5%)
- Developmental disability (5.7%)

System Interactions

- Over the past year, 55% of respondents had been homeless 6 or more months (i.e., chronically homeless)
- 16% had been homeless 3 or more times (i.e., episodically homeless) in the past year.

SYSTEM INTERACTIONS OVER THE PAST YEAR



Homeless Services System Data

Indicator	2015	2016	2017
Shelter occupancy rate	86.4%	98.2%	107.6%
Avg. length of stay per admission (days) – all households	11.3	12.9	19.0
Avg. length of stay per admission (days) – singles	10.4	11.9	16.4
Avg. length of stay per admission (days) – 3+ member families	30.6	36.3	67.8
Number of unique households that accessed shelter	1607	1682	1641
Number of unique households placed in housing through HF	45	41	83
Number of Housing Stability Plan benefit issuances	6748	6634	5528

Niagara's Response

- 21 agencies across Niagara contracted to provide services in:
 - Prevention Services
 - Outreach
 - Supported Transitional Housing
 - Shelters
- Housing First and Home for Good Programs designed for chronically and episodically homeless, providing wrap around supports

Niagara's Response – Capacity Building

- Landlord Engagement Pilot Program
- Increased service integration with mental health and addictions services
- Shelter system review and policy revisions
- Modernization of Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) program
- Use of common database (HIFIS) across all contracted service delivery agencies
- **Increased Focus within *A Home For All* on increasing affordable housing options in Niagara**

THANK YOU!

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