

#### A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN TEEN RESOURCE CENTRE, SAINT JOHN LEARNING EXCHANGE, AND HOUSING ALTERNATIVES

**Safety First** is an initiative serving youth aged 16-29 that supports creative solutions to youth housing needs in our community including rent subsidies, co-housing units, and independent housing. The partnership between TRC, SJLE, and Housing Alternatives has adopted a Housing First approach whereby safe housing is treated as a right; participants' access to housing is not contingent upon education or employment success. Youth lead their case plans with the support of case management. Our goal is to expand on the continuum of housing for youth by building a new 12-unit housing complex for youth in our city's Old North End.



TEEN RESOURCE CENTRE

# SAFETY FIRS

We treat housing as a right and do not make access to safe and secure housing contingent upon education or employment success/attachment.

We meet youth where they are at, respect and promote agency and choice, and foster independence and healthy choices through supportive and trusting relationships.

Supports offered to youth include: independent living skill development, crisis planning, guest management, budgeting, mental health supports, food security, tenant rights, interest exploration, access to education and employment programming, goal setting, and mentorship.

To date, 27 youth are housed in a combination of independent units and co-housing units managed in partnership with Housing Alternatives and with Centre for Youth Care providing additional after hours support.

Since March 2022, we are providing monthly income support for up to 5 youth who do not qualify for government assistance.

### \$632,000 Social innovation funding

## 2.5 YEARS PHASE 2 OF 4

We created a working group with Social Development leadership with the help of Chief Experience Officer, Wendy MacDermott, to identify and discuss opportunities to deliver more options to address youth housing needs in a safe and secure manner.

Amplifying youth voice is one of our core values. In April, youth currently being supported by Safety First participated in an evaluation event where we focused on capturing their experiences of housing and home.

We are looking to add to the continuum of housing for youth by building a new 12-unit affordable housing structure in the Old North End. The building will have 12 1-bedroom apartments as well as programming and case management space on the ground floor.

We are collaborating with Dr. Julia Woodhall-Melnik at UNBSJ's HOME-RL (housing based research lab) to research best practices for implementing Housing First for youth and to contribute to the knowledge base.



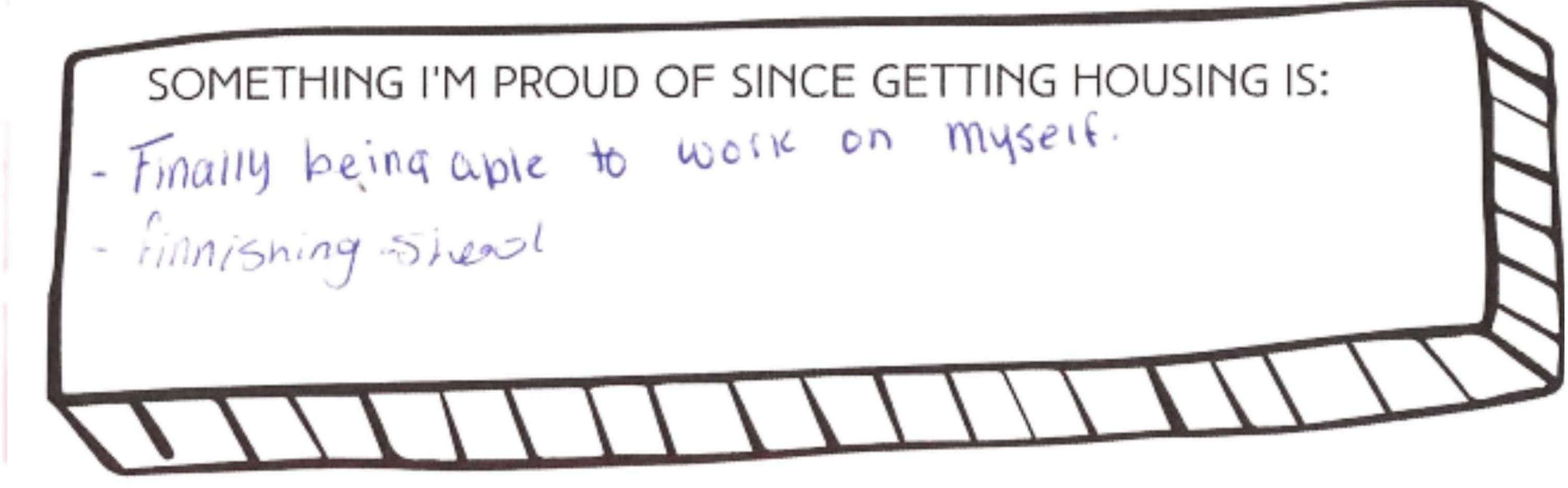


"I feel a lot better not needing to worry as much[...]I've kind of gotten motivation for my art back..."

"Now I'm less stressed I guess about people stealing my [stuff]"

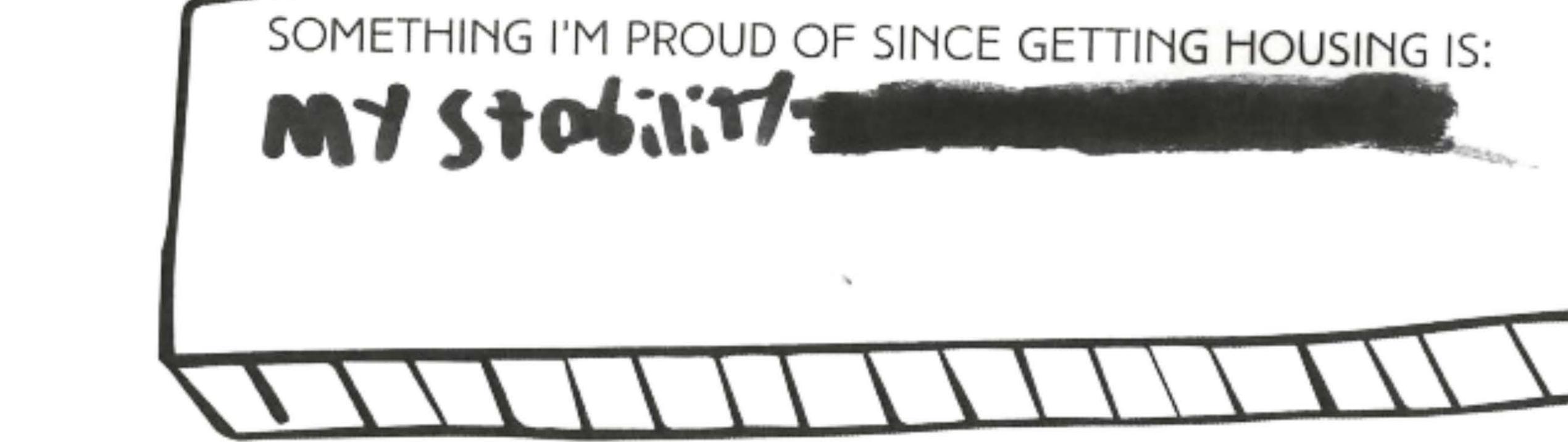
"I feel like from like before I was in housing and now, I was just going down a very bad path. Probably wouldn't be going to college I can tell you that. Probably wouldn't even have gone to grade 12. I'm actually achieving a lot more than I ever thought I would I guess. And ya, just I felt broken, now I feel like I'm fixing it"

"Being in your own place...you can make it yours"



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do they need?

They finally worked through their issues of Mental health and She is fully incledendart

T am confortable where I am and I feel lot better not needing to workey. finally + back into my and and ensoying it.

2 I needed a house where I wasn't listening to Fighting Constantly and didn't have to be worried on who was entering inside at 5-6 cm ! I needed a ftere Parent that wouldn't gamble our food money away and didn't use me as a maid. do they feel? What did they need? 4 I was depressed and felt used! I was also Grieving during the duration of living the with my mother as I lost my step dad to a konery gone wrong I constantly fest that things were my fault and I moved be: my cwn Safty and I felt horible due to rearing mer sister behind. How did they feel?