

Women’s Transition Housing and Supports Program

Safe Homes, Transition Houses, and Second Stage Housing



Gender-based violence (GBV) continues to have a profound impact on individuals and communities across British Columbia. In response, the Province of British Columbia introduced the Gender-Based Violence Action Plan (2023). Through the Women’s Transition Housing Fund (WTHF), the Women’s Transition Housing & Supports Program (WTHSP) is tasked with creating 3,000 new spaces to support women and children in need of safe and stable housing.

In 2024-25, BC Housing supported more than 150 transition houses, safe homes, and second stage housing programs, including 10 programs operated under the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA). These programs support women — with or without children — who are at risk of, or who have experienced violence.

This report provides an overview of BC Housing’s three women’s transition housing programs based on aggregated data submitted monthly in 2024-25. Together, these programs provide women and children with a temporary place to stay, support services, referrals and assistance in planning next steps:

- › **Safe homes** — Safe homes provide short-term shelter for no more than 10 days. Safe homes operate in remote communities and offer emotional support, safety planning and referrals. Depending on the community, short-term safe shelter may be available in the form of an apartment, townhouse unit, a hotel or motel room, or a secure room in a private home.
- › **Transition houses** — Transition houses provide safe, temporary 24/7 staffed shelter, typically for 30 days. Most transition houses are residential homes in confidential locations where women and families live communally. Support workers in these homes provide emotional support, crisis intervention and safety planning.
- › **Second stage housing** — Second stage housing is usually a private, secure, low-cost apartment or townhouse unit where women and their children can live safely and independently for a period ranging from 6 to 18 months. Staff are available to provide emotional support, safety planning and referrals.

Number of Programs and Spaces for WTHSP Sites in B.C., 2024-25

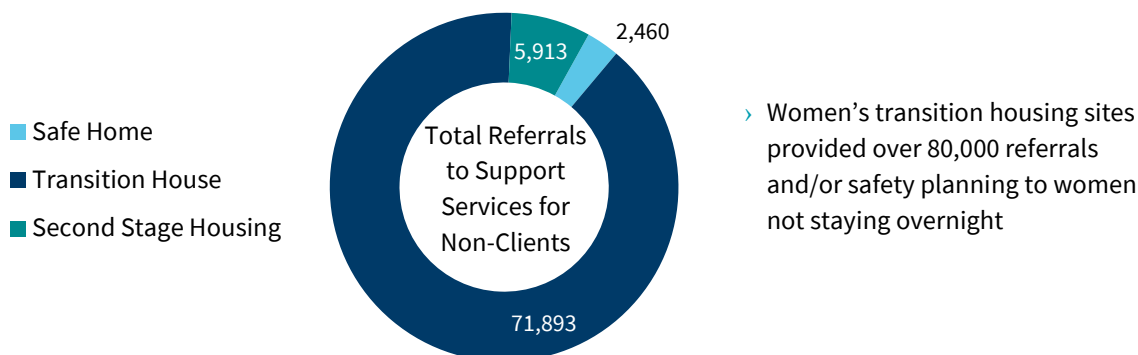
SAFE HOMES			TRANSITION HOUSES			SECOND STAGE HOUSING		
								
25		29	77		922	48		601
 # of Programs			 # of Spaces			Source: BC Housing, Central Property System, March 31, 2025		

This work would not be possible without the partnerships and collaboration across the sector. In particular, we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the Ministry of Housing & Municipal Affairs, Gender Equity Office, Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General, Aboriginal Housing Management Association, BC Society of Transition Houses, and Ending Violence BC, whose commitment continues to strengthen supports for women and children across the province.

Program Statistics

Total Referrals to Support Services across all WTHSP Sites by Program Type in B.C., 2024-25

Some women's transition housing sites offer referrals and support to women who are not staying overnight in the program. These referrals connect women to a wide range of services including legal aid and advocacy services, income assistance and employment programs, childcare and parenting support groups, and culturally safe and Indigenous-specific services.

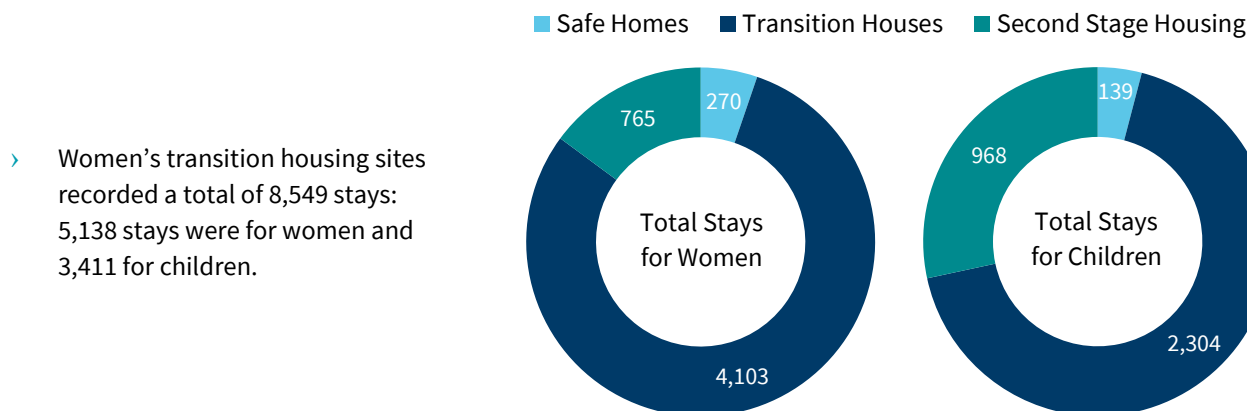


Types of Support Services Provided to Women During WTHSP Site Stay in B.C., 2024-25

The majority of women who have departed from a women's transition housing site have received safety information and/or information about available community supports and services. In cases where this did not occur, it was most often due to limited time for engagement or a lack of interest in receiving the information.



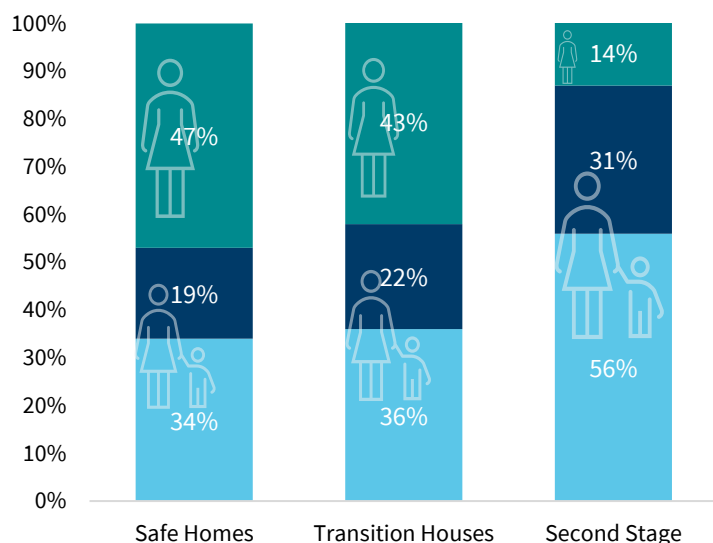
Number of Stays for Women and Children across all WTHSP Sites by Program Type in B.C., 2024-25



Demographics

Percentage of Stays for Women and Children across all WTHSP Sites by Program Type in B.C., 2024-25

■ Children ■ Women with Children ■ Women without Children

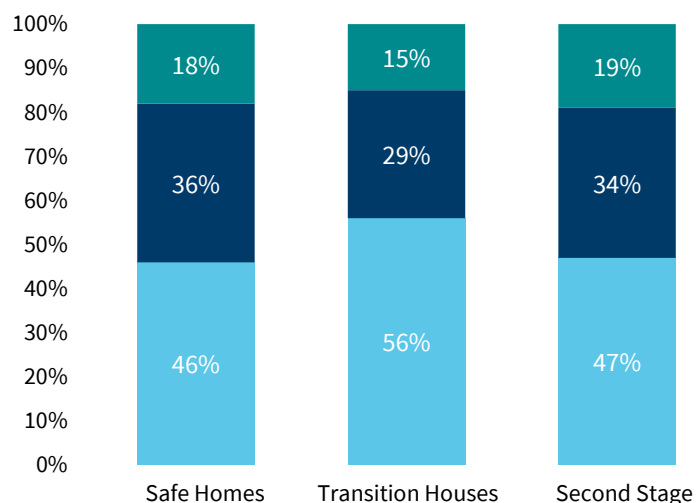


- › Women with children accounted for 39% of women staying across all women's transition housing sites, compared to 61% for women without children.
- › Children made up 40% of occupants staying across women's transition housing sites.
- › Women accessing safe homes and transition houses were more likely to be unaccompanied, while second stage programs primarily served women with children, with children representing a larger share of occupants in the program.

Percentage of Stays for Women by Number of Children and Program Type across all WTHSP Sites by Program Type in B.C., 2024-25

Transition houses tended to serve the highest proportion of women with one child, whereas safe homes and second stage programs more commonly supported women with two or more children.

■ 1 Child ■ 2 Children ■ 3+ Children

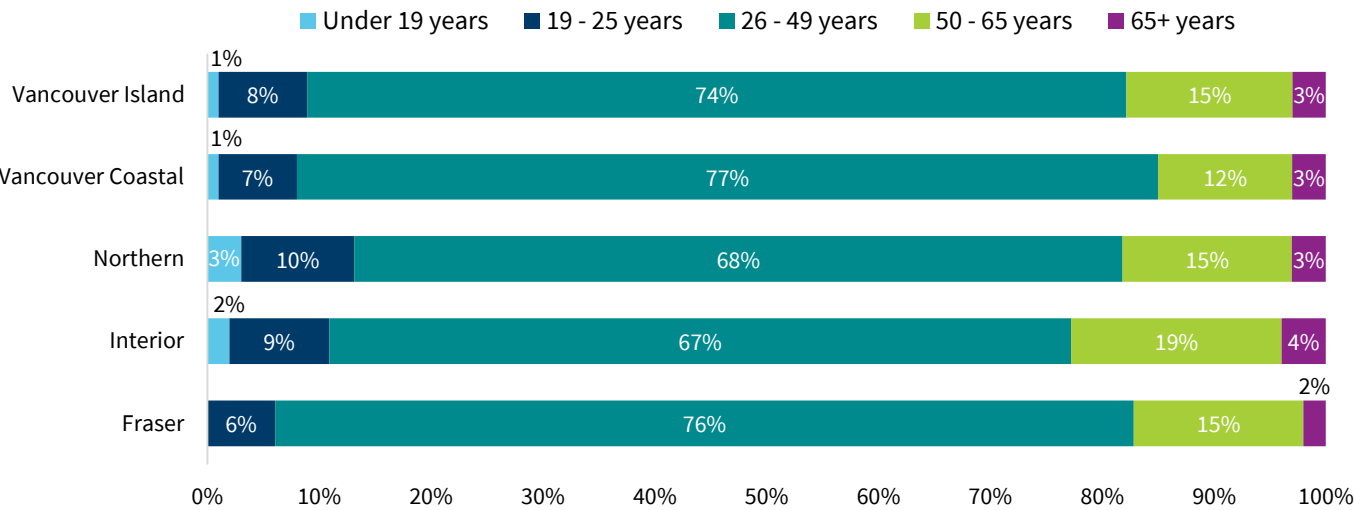


"Child and Youth Programming is busy with after school programs and weekend programming. Slots fill up quickly and Residents are able to book time for childminding during the day so they can meet with their Case Manager; knowing that their kids are nearby being cared for by staff. Residents' have expressed that their kids love coming to programming and that they are grateful that this program is offered."

- Anonymous Provider

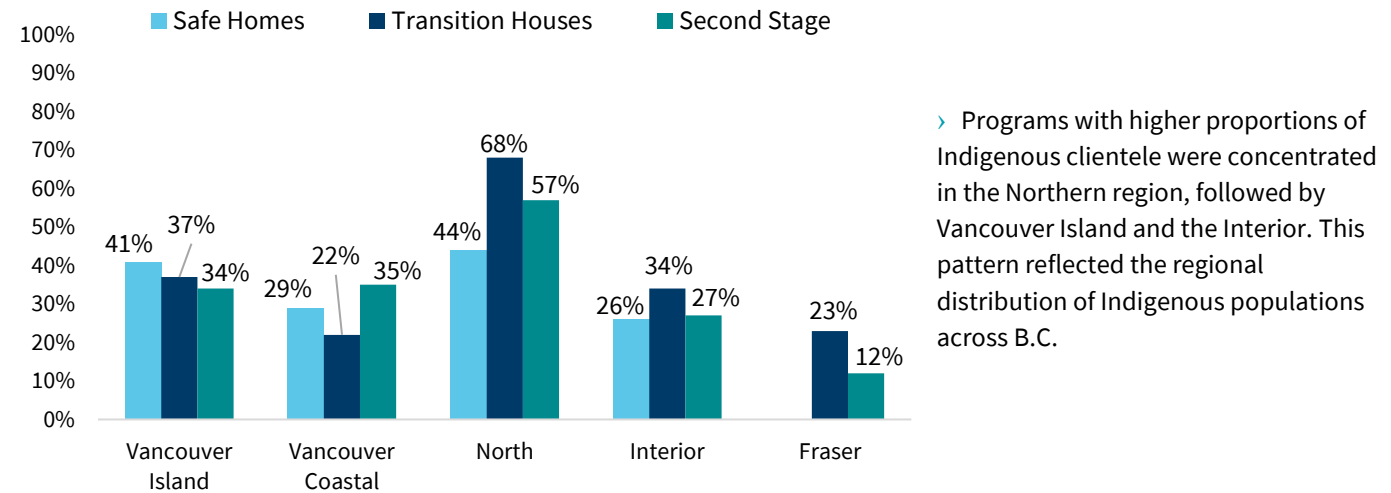
Percentage of Stays for Women by Age Group across all WTHSP Sites by Region in B.C., 2024-25

Across all regions, women’s transition housing sites most frequently served women aged 26 to 49, followed by those aged 50 to 65, and then women aged 19 to 25. These findings highlight which age groups were more likely to access services.



Percentage of Stays for Women of Indigenous Identity across all WTHSP Sites by Region and Program Type in B.C., 2024-25

Indigenous women represent only 5% of the Canadian population (Government of Canada, 2024); however, they are overrepresented in those that access women’s transition housing sites across the province, accounting for 38% of all stays, two-thirds (66%) of which occurred in the Northern region. In response, BC Housing, in partnership with AHMA and housing providers, has dedicated 152 spaces to Indigenous-led programs.

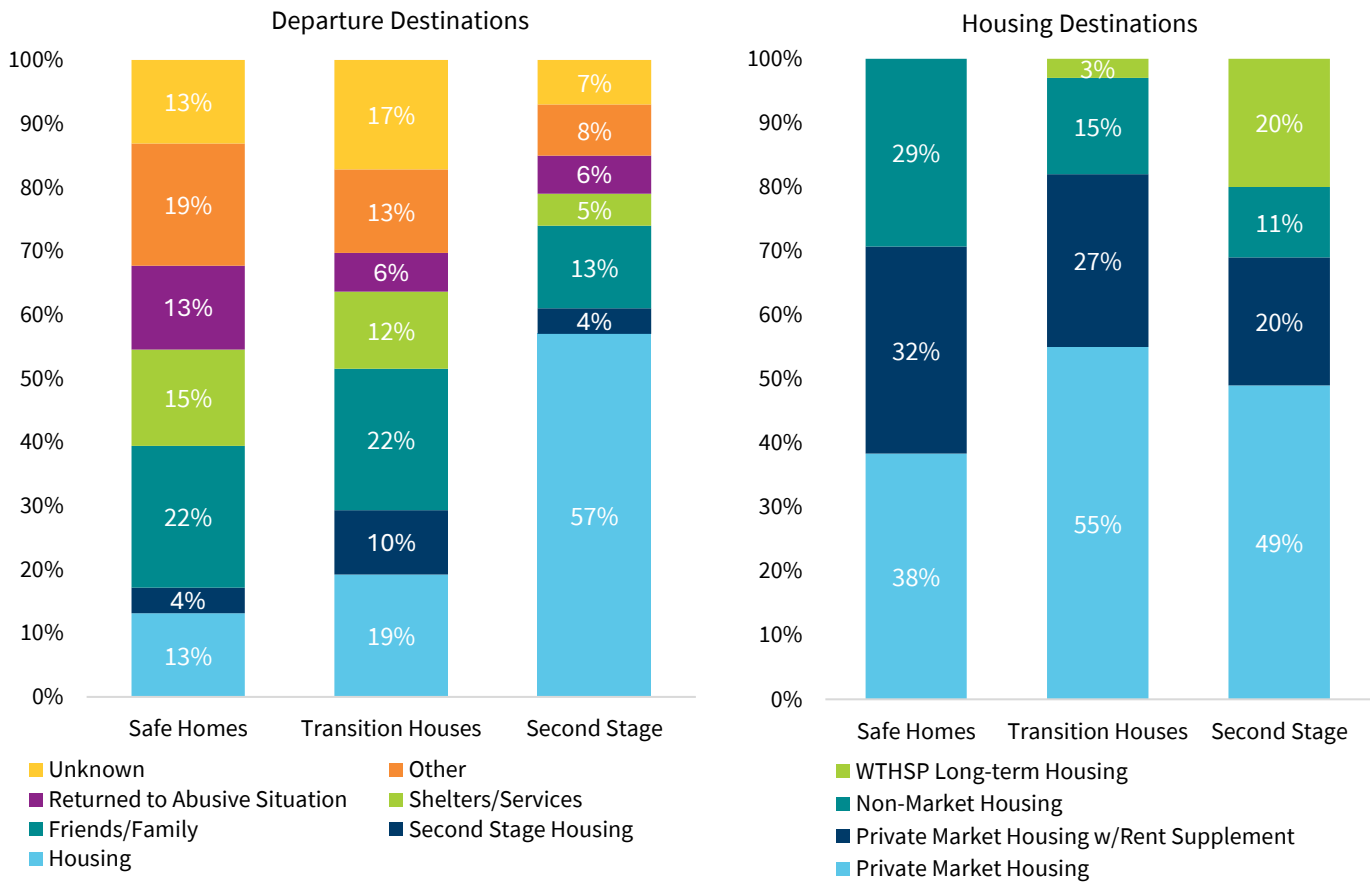


To align with the Anti-Racism Data Act, the Women’s Transition Housing and Supports Program continues to collect data on Indigenous identity and is beginning to expand this work to include ethnocultural data. Preliminary findings are being used to guide our approach to data collection, with plans for a more comprehensive analysis in the future.

Departures

Departure Destinations of Women Leaving WTHSP Sites by Program Type in B.C., 2024-25

Each program type plays an important role in supporting women on their housing journey. The data showed that as women move from safe homes and transition houses into second stage housing, the tailored supports helped improve stability, independent living and long-term housing outcomes. Following participation in second stage programs, more women moved into the new long-term housing programs funded through the Women’s Transition Housing Fund. This trend highlights the importance of having this option to support a flow through services toward long-term housing stability.



Conclusion

The Women’s Transition Housing and Supports Program (WTHSP) continues to respond to the urgent and evolving needs of women, with or without dependent children, who are at risk of or have experienced Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Through the Women’s Transition Housing Fund (WTHF), we continue to prioritize building second stage and long-term housing to respond to the dual challenges of the housing crisis and the need for specialized care for women who are at risk of or have experienced GBV. This work highlights the important progress while emphasizing the need for sustained attention and investment.

Notes:

1. Data is provided to BC Housing by WTHSP providers. Accuracy is dependent on integrity of data provided to BC Housing.
2. Data in this report only includes stays at BC Housing-funded spaces part of our regular WTHSP program. Sites funded under other BC Housing funding programs (not WTHSP) are not included in these figures.
3. A space may refer to a unit with one or multiple beds/rooms or beds. Some safe homes have more than one permanent unit and some do not have any permanent units, while some may be able to access additional spaces as needed, depending on their model. Safe homes are all assigned one space for reporting purposes.
4. Multiple referrals possible per woman and child.
5. Unless otherwise noted, proportions are based on where responses to questions are provided. Unknown responses are excluded from the denominator.
6. A stay includes consecutive nights in the program (minimum 1 night).
7. A woman (and children accompanied by women) may have more than one stay in the same reporting period and at more than one WTHSP site within the reporting period; therefore, stays do not represent unique individuals.
8. Only children who stayed at least one night during their mom/guardian's stay were included in the analysis. Children who did not stay at the transition house for at least one night of the stay were not included.
9. Women reported to stay without children may have children that did not accompany them during the stay. Their children may have accompanied them on other stay(s) at WTHSP sites during the reporting period.
10. Age group is recorded at intake date by the WTHSP provider within the following age groups: Under 19 years, 19-25 years, 26-49 years, 50-65 years, and 65+ years.
11. Indigenous identity and age are self-reported indicators.
12. Departures do not represent distinct individuals, as a woman and children accompanied by women may have stayed more than once during the fiscal year (a stay is 1+ consecutive nights) or across reported fiscal years at one site or at multiple sites/programs.
13. Departure destination to 'housing' includes private market housing, private market housing without a rent supplement, non-market housing/subsidized housing, and long-term housing.
14. The Northern region includes a WTHSP program located in the community of Watson Lake, Yukon.
15. Figures have been rounded to the nearest percentage point. Consequently, the sum of individual percentages may not total 100%

Previous Reports:

<https://research-library.bchousing.org/Home/ResearchItemDetails/1842>
<https://research-library.bchousing.org/Home/ResearchItemDetails/1841>
<https://research-library.bchousing.org/Home/ResearchItemDetails/1823>
<https://research-library.bchousing.org/Home/ResearchItemDetails/2147>
<https://research-library.bchousing.org/Home/ResearchItemDetails/2145>

External Sources:

Government of British Columbia. 2023. Safe and Supported: British Columbia's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan. *Government of British Columbia*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/services-policies-for-government/gender-equity/safe-and-supported-gender-based-violence-action-plan-december-2023.pdf>

Government of Canada. 2024. Ending gender-based violence against Indigenous Peoples. *Government of Canada*. 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/gender-based-violence/ending-gbv-indigenous.html>