



## RainCity Housing LGBTQ2S\* Mentorship Program

Thank you for your interest in our LGBTQ2S\* mentorship project. As you probably know, LGBTQ2S\* youth are much more likely to be experiencing poverty or homelessness than heterosexual youth. Discrimination or harassment from service providers, or rejection from their families and gender segregated shelters, can all lead to ending up on the street.

This can also impact other basics most youth might take for granted, like accessing proper health care or an education. The best way to ensure the safety, proper health, and emotional wellbeing of LGBTQ2S\* youth is by providing housing that respects young people's identity and life choices. But it's more than housing and employment – it's an anti-suicide measure for our young people and it's about building a community of care.

This is why we need your help. At the root of homelessness is a lack of supportive communities for young people. It's our connections with our community, family and friends that keep us all safe from living on our streets. These youth need a natural community made up of people who are interested in them and are looking for lifelong friendships. They need people who will welcome them into their lives and the LGBTQ2S\*'s community.

### **What makes a great mentor?**

A great mentor is someone who is interested in more than charity – they're looking to create a mutual relationship with a young (ages 19-24) person. They are genuinely interested in a relationship based on a mutual benefit for both parties. A great mentor is also someone who shares interests with one person in the program. Finally, a great mentor is someone who is a member of the LGBTQ2S\* community and understands what exclusion feels like, and is willing to share their experience to foster hope for the youth. Hope for a life that feels safe and is filled with acceptance and opportunity.

## **How does the program work?**

The LGBTQ2S\* mentorship program works by pairing youth with adult mentors that share similar interests. We ask that you have time for at least one interaction with the youth once a month. Some examples of interests that may be helpful for the youth:

- Cultural Connections
- Opportunities to participate in employment placements, or employment coaching
- Outdoor activities or sports
- Shared interest in learning or educational opportunities
- Music, art and culture
- Link youth to activities or chosen community
- Cooking

## **How do I get involved?**

If you are interested in being involved please write the youth a letter! Let them know a bit about yourself and why you would be interested in meeting them. As we meet youth throughout the project and after they are housed, we will share the letter with the youth and they can decide if it a good fit for them. If things change in your life, let us know and we'll remove the letter and not schedule a meeting.

## **If a youth wants to meet me, what are the next steps?**

If one of the youth feels the two of you would hit it off, we would help you complete a criminal records check. The check is required by BC legislation, but good news, it's free for volunteers. We would then set up a time that works for both of you to meet at the house! You can contact Aaron Munro to get the process started.

**Cell: 604.375.9130**

**Email: [amunro@raincityhousing.org](mailto:amunro@raincityhousing.org)**

We really appreciate your interest in this project. No one should be homeless, especially vulnerable young people. Together we can find solutions LGBTQ2S\* homelessness in Vancouver and ensure these young people do not spend one more night of their lives on the street. Every life matters – these are *our* youth!