PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Here is a brief summary of the accomplishments and challenges of Ready to Rent BC during the fiscal year April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017.

This Annual Report speaks to an exceptional year for Ready to Rent BC. In a time when housing continues to be one of the most pressing concerns for people and communities, access to tenant education is acute. This year has seen significant increase in both our reach and the impact of our program. The revised Train the Trainer approach and the financial contributions we have received have put RentSmart curriculum in more hands than ever before, across BC and now Alberta. Interest in the program continues to grow across Canada. We have had the opportunity to speak at conferences across the country, connecting with new partners who see the potential and value of this program for their community. Rigorous evaluation and measurement provides us with a clear indication of our impact as well as areas where we can improve and expand. None of this would be possible without the determined commitment of our Board, our Leadership Team, our staff and contractors, and our community partners.

- The Board of Directors continues to ensure the organization delivers on its core mandate of housing education to those who have difficulty maintaining and accessing appropriate housing. We greatly appreciate all the service of past and current board members.
- Our talented Executive Team continues to scale our work and the organization, weaving partnerships that embed the program in sustainable community capacity. Their ability to bring together diverse stakeholders is both remarkable and the foundation on which we can continue to achieve new levels of impact. Their leadership, vision, and skill is second to none.
- A vital team of staff and contractors bring a high degree of commitment and passion to our day to day operations and growth. Their dedication, professionalism, and warmth are at the core of what we do and how we do it.

2016/17 has been both busy and remarkable. A foundation for growth and impact has been firmly and successfully built. Thousands of people are achieving greater housing stability. The year ahead promises to be equally exciting as this momentum carries our program to new people and communities.

Kaye Melliship,

President

May 20, 2017
MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE TEAM

2016/17 has been another whirlwind year!

This has been the year that Ready to Rent has made a significant shift from sole delivery to a distributed model of delivery by partnering with community organizations in communities throughout BC and other provinces. It was in January 2016 that Ready to Rent hosted the first Train the Trainer (TTT) using the new model. Since then, Ready to Rent has hosted 6 TTT’s across BC, and 3 in Alberta. We learned a lot this past year about how to share Ready to Rent’s best practices in a sustainable way. The next year will be about continuing to build capacity within Ready to Rent and our community partners to have greater impact together.

Here are the significant strides Ready to Rent made in 2016/17:

- 9 TTT, training 114 new Community Educators
- Over 2000 participants taking the RentSmart education
- 51 courses RentSmart delivered
- Adapted RentSmart materials to the Alberta context and hosted the first TTT’s
- Launched RentSmart online
- Partnered with BCNPHA to expand the RentSmart model to housing providers across BC
- Spoke at numerous conferences and webinars
- Participated in the BC Rental Coalition and in developing a plan for affordable housing in BC

This year, we’d like to specifically thank our staff, Kate Lambert, Jess Goerzen and Linda Isarasakdi, who have been dedicated to the organization and the importance of prevention! Also, thank you to our amazing Master Trainers, Susana Guardado, Lisa Gibson and Donalee White. Finally, Ready to Rent welcomed Humaira Ahmed, Director, Marketing and Communications to the team.

Kristi Fairholm Mader & Kristi Rivait
OVERVIEW

In spring, 2017 Ready to Rent staff had a chance to look back and reflect on the past year and the strides we have taken as an organization. Here are some of the highlights that came from the day.

- 3 Train the Trainers in Alberta
- Tested, tried and changed systems and structures in the TTT for impact
- Endorsement of RentSmart by BCNPHA
- Impact measurement systems and demonstrating value tools established
- The name Ready to Rent has been heard across Canada
- Development of courses to meet specific needs such as seniors, youth etc.
- RentSmart BC course is available online
- Validity of RentSmart certificate is growing
- Over three conference were spoken at
Between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017 over 300 people took a RentReady course.

This year, Ready to Rent had a total of six RentReady population specific courses available to Community Educators. RentReady Youth continues to be the most in demand RentReady courses over the year.
WHAT RENTREADY PARTICIPANTS TELL US

“I most enjoyed budgeting and tenant rights. The landlord/tenant exercise was fantastic and an eye opener.”

“I’ll be able to change how I react and deal with things that come up in my professional and personal life, so thank you!

“I most enjoyed anger/communication/relationship management. It’s so helpful to have relationships and feelings factored into everything else you “have” to do to get through life.
Over 2000 people have taken RentSmart across BC and Alberta

Over the past year, Ready to Rent in partnership with Community Educators delivered 51 RentSmart courses in BC and Alberta. RentSmart courses continue to expand into new communities such as Nanaimo, Cranbrook, Prince George, Smithers and Edmonton. Additionally, one RentSmart course ran in February, 2017 in Edmonton, Alberta.
RentSmart graduation rates have increased in the past year from 69% in 2016-2016 to 75% in 2016-2017.
“This course was awesome, I’ve enjoyed it so much – I will be going to the fire safety store to purchase a ladder and fire extinguisher.”

“As a result of taking this course I will do everything differently. I moved in as I started this course and used all of the info provided.”

“There is nothing I would do to make this course better. I have never taken a course like this before.”

“RentSmart was excellent! What was truly incredible was the facilitator who made time for me outside of class to sit with me and go over the program material. I needed these one-to-one tutorials as my brain injury makes it difficult to grasp information in a classroom setting. Through the program, I learned about my rights as a tenant and the laws that apply to renting. I benefited further by learning how to budget money and how to prepare and set-up for my future rental.”

“The RentSmart course was great! It provided me with the tools and knowledge to find a good rental property. I learned about my rights and responsibilities as a tenant, and landlord responsibilities and expectations were also covered. I now know how to be a fantastic tenant and use effective communication with property owners.”
WHAT HOUSING PROVIDERS HAD TO SAY...

“Participants feel empowered when given the knowledge and skills of the many components that RentSmart offers. Participants are engaged to attempt to meet their own basic housing and social needs. Their increased knowledge of tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities motivate them to confidently seek housing both inside/outside of their home communities. To move forward with healthy expectations and the feeling of being able to have a positive impact on their own futures, to function as valued tenants and/or homeowners.”

- Deanna, Pauquachin Nation, 2016 (Housing Provider)

“I for sure have seen Ready to Rent empower community members! They don’t realize how little they know about living off reserve until taking the course. When we live on reserve our whole lives moving off is a complete culture shock because finally we are held accountable for our actions meaning we HAVE to pay rent in order to have a home there is little flexibility for us, and also we have to think of our finances and budget our money properly so the members think ‘wow I need a full time job and so does my mate in order to make this work’ so taking the course is somewhat of a stepping stone on to bigger and better things, like getting a job or going back to school so that they can get a good job to afford housing.”

- Shana Sylvester, Tsawout First Nation, 2016 (Housing Provider)
SURVEY RESULTS FROM 2016 GRADUATE SURVEY

Every year, Ready to Rent performs a graduate survey to measure our impact. Through this survey, we can better understand how the RentSmart model can best meet the needs of RentSmart participants. Below are some of the key findings from the 2016 RentSmart graduate survey.

Key Findings

100% of RentSmart grads agreed or somewhat agreed that the facilitator was knowledgeable and helpful.

79% of RentSmart grads agreed or somewhat agreed that the learning from the RentSmart course helped them have a positive relationship with their landlord.

69% of RentSmart grads agreed or somewhat agreed that the RentSmart certificate helped them secure their housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016 RENTSMArt GRADUATE SURVEY</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My facilitator was knowledgeable and helpful</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a place to rent was easier as a result of taking the course</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking after my place is easier as a result of taking the course</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a more confident tenant as a result of the course</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course helped me to have a positive relationship with my landlord</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I used the RentSmart certificate when looking for housing</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The RentSmart certificate helped me secure my housing</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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AFFORDABILITY, THE NUMBER ONE BARRIER

When asked, “In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing renters today?” RentSmart graduates overwhelmingly pointed to affordability. Specifically, single parents, families with pets and people with disabilities are struggling to find appropriate and affordable homes. Almost half, (43.75%) of RentSmart graduates lived in market rental housing, 25% lived in subsidized housing, 12.5% lived with family and 18.75% lived in transitional housing.

IMPACT FROM 2015 AND EARLIER GRADUATES

Ready to Rent wanted to understand the long-term impact of the RentSmart program. To do so, we asked graduates from 2015 and earlier how the RentSmart model impacted their long-term housing stability.

Long-term Key Findings

93% of past RentSmart grads reported they are likely to recommend RentSmart to a friend or family member

93% of all past RentSmart grads either moved and got their security deposit back or did not move at all and remained stably housed.

81% of past RentSmart grads reported that since taking the RentSmart course they had better communication.

62% of past RentSmart grads reported that the RentSmart course gave you a step up in the rental market.

READY TO RENT
Ready to Rent continues to robustly track WalkWith support. WalkWith sessions were the highest volume to date with a total of 76 sessions in 2016/17. WalkWith sessions were primarily support to RentSmart grads and the majority were in regards to Residential Tenancy Branch queries in the CRD.
This year, Ready to Rent ran three Train the Trainers in Alberta and six Train the Trainers in BC, training a total of 114 new Community Educators. As of March 31, 2017 Ready to Rent had 200 Community Educators in BC, Alberta and Manitoba.
64.71% of Educators who do not actively run courses reported, “While I don’t run courses, I use the learning from the Train the Trainer in my work to increase housing stability.”
WHAT COMMUNITY EDUCATORS SAY...

“Mid-way through the youth RentSmart group, there is already a tangible success directly related to program participation. One group participant, who has been couch surfing for several months, has managed to secure market housing before the course has even come to a close. Using her RentSmart knowledge and the reputation of the Ready to Rent program, she met a landlord and viewed a bachelor suite armed with knowledge and confidence. While that particular suite rented before she had a chance to complete the paperwork, the landlord reached out to her about another suite he had available. He indicated that she had made a great impression and that he really wanted her as a tenant knowing that she was enrolled in the RentSmart course. Using what she has learned so far, she successfully secured her tenancy and has begun to look into renters insurance.”
- Carole, Educator from Island Metis Family & Community Services Society, August 2016.

“I have benefitted greatly from the knowledge about tenancy issues, communication, and home maintenance, which I can pass along to clients. Women in my course really enjoy the chance to discuss housing issues with their peers and learn their rights. Women take great pride in participating in the program and my relationship with clients is enhanced by it as a facilitator.”
- Community Educator, Vancouver, BC

“An individual who recently completed the RentSmart course has found long term housing in market rentals!”
- Community Educator, Kelowna BC

“I love how involved the participants are, and every session I end up learning new things.”
- Community Educator, Kelowna, BC

“I have had 2 youth secure and maintain decent housing as a result of RentSmart information I shared.”
- Community Educator, Cariboo Chilcotin, BC
“One of our RentSmart youth graduates got housing today. We are thrilled for him. The Independent Living Worker accompanied him to the viewing but he phoned apartments/property management companies on his own, completed the application and setup the viewing appointment on his own. (We are proud). He said the course gave him the confidence he needed to do it!”
- Community Educator, Campbell River, BC

“I have noticed a boost in confidence levels with several participants. The overall ability to be knowledgeable about rights has proven to really be useful for our clients to stand up to landlords and prevent illegal evictions. It helps to alleviate some of the time I spend advocating for clients, when they have their peers (or they themselves) are able to solve simple issues without calling me.”
- Community Educator, 2016

“Having just completed the first RentSmart program to a group of ladies from one of our shelter, the look of accomplishment from them was awesome. They stated that they feel like they have more control in a rental situation than they have had in the past. They appeared to be excited to start looking for market housing.”
- Community Educator, 2016
Community Educator Partner Organizations

Community Educators are primarily employees in the social services who directly work with clients who are unstably housed. Below are the community partner organizations who have Community Educators in their organization.

**BRITISH COLUMBIA**

**VANCOUVER ISLAND**
- Intercultural Association
- Burnside Gorge Community Association
- The Cridge Centre for Families
- Victoria Women’s Transition House
- Tsawout First Nation
- Fernwood NRG
- John Howard Society North Island
- The Salvation Army Victoria
- William Head Institution
- Island Métis Family & Community Services Society
- Victoria Boys and Girls Club
- NIL TU,O Child and Family Service Society
- Our Place Society
- Victoria Cool Aid Soci
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- Cowichan Housing Association
- Campbell River & North Island Transition Society
- Salt Spring Island Community Services
- Gulf Island Secondary School
- Pauqauchin First Nation
- Salvation Army Victoria
- YMCA-YWCA of Vancouver Island
- Pacifica Housing
- John Howard Society / Wilkinson Institution
- VIRCS
- Island Health Authority
- Wachiay Friendship Centre Society
- Camosun College
- Nanaimo Region John Howard Society

**KOOTENAYS**
- Aqanttanam Housing Society
- Nelson Community Services Centre

**LOWER MAINLAND**
- LU’MA Housing
- Vancouver Aboriginal Transformative Justice Services Society
- Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre
- Xolhemet Society
- Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society
- Salvation Army Harbour Light Vancouver
- ACCESS - Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society
- More Than A Roof
- Broadway Youth Resource Center
- Mamele’awt Qwesem & To’o Housing Society
- Mission Community Services
- Langley Association for Community Living
- Milieu Family Services
- Aunt Leah’s Society
- Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre
- The Salvation Army Belkin House
- New View Society
- Spirit of the Children Housing Society
- Progressive Housing

**OKANAGAN**
- Canadian Mental Health Association - Okanagan
- Vernon Native Housing Society
- Okanagan Metis and Aboriginal Housing Society
- John Howard Society of Central and South Okanagan
- Okanagan Boys and Girls Club
- Secwepemc Child and Family Services
- Interior Community Services
- Kamloops Regional Correctional Centre
- The Kamloops & District Elizabeth Fry Society
- Phoenix Centre

**CARIBOO CHILCOTIN**
- Cariboo Chilcotin Child Development Center
- Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family and Community Services

**NORTHERN BC**
- Prince Rupert Unemployment Action Centre
- Canadian Mental Health Association Prince George
- Kopar Administration
- Smithers Community Services Association

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**ALBERTA**

**EDMONTON AND AREA**
- Canadian Mental Health Association Edmonton Region
- Red Deer Housing Authority
- Metis Urban Housing Corporation
- The Mustard Seed
- E4C
- The Salvation Army
- Bissell Centre
- Jasper Place Wellness Centre
- Alberta Health Services
- Lurana Shelter Society
- Government of Alberta
- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers
- St. Albert Community Community Social Development
- Catholic Social Services
- Dickinsfield Amity House
- Terra Center
- Capital Region Housing

**CALGARY AND AREA**
- Strategic Housing Initiatives
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Calgary
- Awo Taan Healing Lodge Society
- Calgary Housing
- Aboriginal Futures Career & Training Centre
- Cochrane Society for Housing Options
- Cochrane Family & Community Support Services
- Western Rocky View Family & Community Resource Centre
- Town of Canmore Family & Community Support Services
- Town of High River & MD of Foothills Family & Community Support Services
- Calgary John Howard Society

**ALBERTA SOUTH**
- Medicine Hat Community Housing Society

**ALBERTA CENTRAL**
- City of Grande Prairie

**MANITOBA**
- New Directions
- Winnipeg Rental Network
CONFERENCE AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

- BCNPHA Conference – Executive Director speaking session on prevention, plenary on RentSmart model
- VATJSS Aboriginal Justice Conference – Executive Director spoke on RentSmart model
- VAFCS Aboriginal Approach to Homelessness Conference – Executive Director spoke on RentSmart model
- CHRA – Webinar - Executive Director spoke on RentSmart model
- BC Housing – Webinar - Executive Director spoke on RentSmart model
- CASH – Executive Director spoke on RentSmart model
- Fraser Valley Immigrant and Refugee Conference – Strategic Program Manager spoke on RentSmart as a Solution
- BCNPHA RENT - Cranbrook, Lower Mainland, Strategic Program Manager spoke on PIPPA and 3 Keys to Successful Tenancies, respectively.
- National Housing Strategy, Ottawa - Executive Director Consulted
- BC’s Affordable Housing Plan – Executive Director Consulted
- CBC BC Almanac - Executive Director spoke on the rental crisis in BC
- Port Hardy Community Event on Housing First – Strategic Program Manager spoke on RentSmart model
SCALING RENTSMART

(2015-2016)

(2016-2017)
RENTSMART SUITE
READY TO RENT BC

101 – 2860 Quadra St
Victoria, BC V8T 4E7
Phone: 250-388-7171
Fax: 250-388-7174