

Raising the Roof launches Streetswear by RTR; a kid's fashion line designed for youth experiencing homelessness

This November, Raising the Roof is bringing attention to youth homelessness in Canada with a thought-provoking fashion collection



Toronto, ON, November 14, 2022 - On any given night, up to 7,000 children across Canada experience homelessness. To bring urgent attention to this growing epidemic for this National Homeless Youth Awareness Month, Raising the Roof (RTR) is introducing a children's concept collection, Streetswear by RTR. The collection of children's clothing and accessories has added street-survival features specially designed for youth experiencing homelessness.

In recent years, across runways, fashion trends have been inspired by homelessness. Streetswear by RTR takes this a step further and while the items are not for purchase, the collection aims to spark a necessary conversation surrounding the very real growing epidemic happening on our streets, with the rise of youth homelessness.

“20% of Canadians experiencing homelessness are youth; a number that is growing right before our eyes,” says Marc Soberano, Executive Director, Raising the Roof. “People can often turn a blind eye to homelessness. So, we created the Streetswear by RTR collection to draw attention to the ongoing crisis of youth homelessness in Canada. Even though these items aren't real, the impact this epidemic has on thousands of children across Canada definitely is.”

Launched at Fashion Art Toronto, the city's longest running fashion week and in which 1 in 100 youth will experience homelessness, the Streetswear by RTR collection includes:

- *Pavement Parka*, a multi-functional winter coat that unravels into a full sized kids sleeping bag.

- *Tap-Me Teddy* (made of hyper-durable material), which accepts card-tapped payments, so kids can panhandle in a cashless society.
- *Cardboard Cargos*, allowing kids to pad their pockets with cardboard so they can have an easier time lying on concrete and benches.
- *Tent-o-Poncho*, a wearable, weatherproof shelter that can be attached to subway grates to create a heated tent.
- *Kevlar Kicks*, which use Carbon Fibre and Kevlar material to protect kids from broken glass and needles as they run through alleyways.

Impassioned by the cause, notable Toronto-based designers Lauren Novak and Caitlin Wright collaborated with Raising the Roof to bring this impactful collection to life. Lauren is the designer behind Remark by Lauren, and creates distinctive pieces from pre-existing materials, while Caitlin is a costume designer, wardrobe stylist and the designer behind Kyshe, a brand specializing in limited run items from vintage garments.



While this collection will not be for sale, there is a clothing item that can actually make a difference. This winter, buy an iconic Raising the Roof toque for \$25 to help those in need, with profits going towards long-term homeless solutions.

“For over 25 years, the Raising the Roof Toque Campaign has supported homelessness prevention programs across Canada – raising over \$9 million in support for our 200 partner agencies,” continues Soberano. “Our goal is to ensure all people in Canada have access to a safe, stable home and the support they need to achieve their potential.”

Canadians can join the fight by purchasing the iconic Raising the Roof toque to help end homelessness in Canada. To learn more about the organization, the collection or buy a toque visit StreetswearKids.com.

About Raising the Roof:

For 25 years, Raising the Roof has been a national leader in homelessness prevention. Its research and pilot projects are used by organizations across the country to prevent and end homelessness in their community. The iconic Toque Campaign has raised over \$9 million for over 200 homelessness prevention programs across the country. Raising the Roof's Reside program renovates vacant properties into housing for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. The renovations of these properties are used as a vehicle to train and employ people with barriers to employment through social enterprise contractors. Eighty-five per cent of people who worked on past Reside projects obtained full-time positions in the trades.

<https://raisingtheroof.org/>