

BSAU



**It starts with
understanding.**

Our mission is to end chronic homelessness.

Our vision is to see that all people grow healthier through involvement in strong, accepting and respectful communities.

A community that learns together, grows together.



BOYLEstreet
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Boyle Street's Values

No matter our backgrounds, we share much in common, and that connectedness of experience is a strength to be recognized, celebrated and drawn on.

Everything we do matters, and the little things are just as important as the big ones — a small gesture can have a great impact on another's life.

Each member of our community is deserving of a full measure of dignity, support and respect.

We believe that life is too serious to be taken seriously, and humour is a central part of our life and work at Boyle Street.



What is the Boyle Street Academy of Understanding

The aim of the BSAU is to help foster compassion by teaching people about the lived experiences of poverty and homelessness and to help individuals build relationships across communities. By working together to build understanding, we work towards Boyle Street's goal of a stronger, more inclusive city.

At the BSAU, we facilitate conversations that are needed for us to best support each other as neighbours and members of one shared community. The work we do at Boyle Street cannot exist only within our four walls. It requires the knowledge and understanding gained in our sessions to be brought to and shared with others to spread awareness, compassion, and empathy.

This program is designed to create lasting change and leave participants feeling empowered and inspired about the future of their community.

Our Approach

The are many reasons someone might come to experience homelessness: the legacy of the residential school system; life-changing, traumatic events; or living with physical and mental health challenges without access to adequate support services are all ways some may find themselves unhoused with nowhere to turn. Regardless of how they got there, we believe that all individuals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. This requires each of us to work together to better understand one another.

There is no singular path into poverty and homelessness and so there must be many unique pathways out of it. Our approach is focused on the needs of each individual and their own desired path. Our work is informed by best practices, and the voices of those we serve and is put into action by taking innovative and creative steps to implement what we learn. The Boyle Street Academy of Understanding was developed to share this knowledge with the public and call in the wider community to our cause.

Our Sessions

In Fall 2022 we launched the “Boyle Street Academy of Understanding” through which we offer a certificate upon completion of four presentations:

- 1. Understanding Vulnerability:** a two-hour presentation that discusses barriers to inclusion, stigmas and offers tips surrounding how to build trust with vulnerable individuals you may encounter.
- 2. Understanding Harm Reduction:** a 75-minute presentation which focuses on the basics of harm reduction, what it means for communities and how it exists in our daily lives.
- 3. Understanding Housing:** a one-hour presentation in which participants will better understand the barriers to accessing housing and the lived experiences of those having to navigate housing services.
- 4. Understanding Vulnerability, Part 2:** a final 90-minute conclusionary presentation reflecting on the key learnings, offering a deeper dive into core courses and answering any personal questions.



Program Structure

- The BSAU certificate program is comprised of four presentations provided by Boyle Street's expert staff.
- These sessions can be provided in person or virtually.
- A minimum of five participants is required per session.
- After completion of all four presentations, a certificate is given to the participating organization, business or community group, as well as some celebratory swag to showcase your dedication.
- A \$1000 donation is suggested for each organization participating in the certificate program.
- There is a minimum requirement of two weeks between each session to allow for reflection.
- Completion within a six-month period is suggested.
- BSAU is for any organization, company, school, workplace, or group of individuals looking to better understand vulnerability in their community.



To find out more about our work and ways to get involved in helping create lasting change within our community, **visit our website.**

You can also contact us at **development@boylestreet.org**

@boylestreetcommunityservices

 BoyleStreetCommunityServices

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 BoyleStreetOnline