



## Partnering to Increase Successful Tenancies

RentSmart Ontario believes in the transformative power of education to help individuals and families to find and maintain their housing, increase successful tenancies and prevent housing instability and homelessness.

### What is RentSmart?

RentSmart (Ready to Rent BC) is a proven education and support model for tenants, landlords and community champions with one goal, **Successful Tenancies**. Successful tenancies are key to building strong communities, increasing housing stability, and preventing homelessness.

Since 2009, Ready to Rent BC (R2R) has certified over 300 individuals and Community Partners as RentSmart Community Educators who have delivered RentSmart education to over 2,500 people in a growing number of regions across Canada.

### The RentSmart model has three main goals:

1. Assist people to find and/or maintain good housing;
2. Reduce conflict, damages and evictions, and;
3. Increase housing stability.

**What is a Community Partner?** Organizations and social service systems that want to integrate RentSmart capacity building model into their services.

**Who is a Community Educator?** Individuals who are trained to deliver the RentSmart education suite of programs. Community Educators tend to be staff of organizations, government, housing and housing support providers (community partners) who are helping people to find and stay in suitable and stable housing.

RentSmart education includes three distinct courses: RentSmart Certificate course (12 hours), RentSmart Basics (3 hours) and RentSmart Landlord.

#### **1. RentSmart Certificate** 12 hour tenant Certificate course covers:

- Housing priorities and applications
- tenant rights and responsibilities
- landlord expectations and responsibilities
- budgeting and planning for housing expenses
- effective communication skills
- maintenance do's and don'ts, crisis management, safety and pests

#### **2. RentSmart Basics** is a 3-hour introductory course that focuses on the '3 Keys to Housing Success'.

The curriculum has specific adaptations to meet the needs of:

- youth
- immigrants and refugees
- people experiencing mental health and addictions
- seniors



**3. RentSmart Landlord** is a professional development course designed to support tenant management and support workers, property managers, and landlords with creating successful tenancies. With RentSmart Landlord education, landlords gain skills and tools to support common understanding and manage expectations between landlords and tenants reducing confusion, miscommunication and conflict. Landlords learn about RentSmart tenants and to utilize collaborative communication and problem solving strategies with tenants leading to successful tenancies.

And **it's working**. In a recent 3<sup>rd</sup> party-conducted evaluation:

- 100% of respondents said their knowledge about renting increased as a result of taking the RentSmart Certificate course
- 92% indicated their confidence with renting was greatly increased
- 86% said that keeping their housing was easier
- 72% said finding a place was easier
- 66% used the RentSmart Certificate when applying for housing, and 70% of those said it directly helped them gain housing

### **How to Become a Community Partner and Community Educator**

RentSmart Ontario staff are happy to answer any questions you have about the RentSmart model (education, certification and support). **Connect with Sherry Madden, RentSmart Ontario** and begin the process of becoming a Community Partner with a conversation. Open and closed training sessions are available.

#### **Step 1: Bring RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer) to your community**

- Register online for an Open Training session - includes lunch and session materials
- Attend the 4-day training that covers the following:
  - Best practices in housing stability and homelessness prevention
  - Adult education/facilitation principles and life skills instruction
  - Curriculum for RentSmart education programs
  - Strategy for engaging landlords
  - Measuring impact
  - Conditions for successful delivery of RentSmart Education model

Upon completion, trainees can become certified Community Educators and are able to deliver all RentSmart courses. A licensing agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of community partners, community educators, RentSmart Ontario and Ready to Rent BC, the National certifying body.



### **Step 2: Deliver the RentSmart Education Model for Successful Tenancies**

- Community Partners agree to RentSmart Ontario standards and encourage Community Educators to teach courses
- RentSmart Ontario provides coaching to first time Community Educators
- Community Partners purchase manuals and certificates from R2R BC
- Community Educators use R2R BC and RentSmart Ontario evaluation and impact measurement systems

### **Step 3: Be a Community Educator in Good Standing**

- A Community Educator license is valid for 3 years. Recertification is offered through a one-day, on-line recertification workshop

### **Community Partners and Educators receive the following benefits:**

- Professional development that includes facilitation skills, group management and capacity building focused upon homelessness prevention, housing rights/responsibilities, and financial literacy
- License to deliver a program proven to help youth, individuals and families achieve housing stability
- Regularly updated curriculum that is focused on building the combination of knowledge, skills and confidence specifically helping people find and keep their housing
- Curriculum, PowerPoints, handouts and manuals are provided
- Marketing, communications, and course materials and promotions pre-developed and available for co-branding
- Connection to a growing network of community partners and Community Educators
- Bi-monthly Community Educator newsletters and quarterly webinars
- Staff support to organize and deliver your first RentSmart course
- Impact that is measured collectively
- Regularly updated data that can be shared with funders and community
- Part of a growing movement for the prevention of homelessness

### **Role of Ready to Rent**

- Ready to Rent BC (R2R BC) is the National headquarters and certifying body and sets out national RentSmart Program standards of excellence and maintains consistency and quality in all RentSmart Programs
- R2R BC is responsible for setting out the costing structures of all RentSmart programs
- R2R BC delivers RentSmart programs in British Columbia and works with a range of community partners to deliver RentSmart education in other regions, provinces and territories
- R2R BC trains and certifies provincial Master Trainers
- R2R BC manages all registrations for RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer) courses
- R2R BC provides curriculum and materials and supports to educators
- R2R BC fulfills manual and material orders in a timely manner

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- R2R BC maintains a database of all RentSmart graduates in order to confirm certificate status and act as a reference
- R2R BC will provide ongoing evaluation and impact measurement processes, and incorporate participant feedback for the ongoing improvement of the curriculum and educational experience
- R2R BC will offer a recertification course to educators to renew credentials after three years

### **Role of RentSmart Ontario**

- RentSmart Ontario Master Trainers train and certify Community Educators according to and maintaining the RentSmart Program standards of excellence
- RentSmart Ontario will offer an annual recertification/updates day that all educators are encouraged to attend. This will begin in Year Three.
- RentSmart Ontario will provide telephone support to educators and participants who require housing support
- RentSmart Ontario provides ongoing professional development opportunities in the form of webinars, training and publications
- RentSmart Ontario will raise awareness of the RentSmart model with community partner, housing providers and landlords in Ontario

### **Role of Community Partners**

- Agree to RentSmart principles and best practices
- Adhere to the Community Educator licensing agreement
- Ensure that RentSmart courses will be taught by certified Community Educators only
- Support and encourage Community Educators to deliver courses
- Agree that the Ready to Rent and RentSmart material is the property of Ready to Rent BC and cannot be used for other purposes without written approval
- Community partners can co-brand RentSmart marketing materials provided
- Purchase manuals and certificates through Ready to Rent BC

### **Role of Community Educators**

- Deliver RentSmart Education model courses
- Ensure that required curriculum is taught
- Engage with learners through adult education principles
- Provide RentSmart with an accurate list of course graduates with contact information
- Participate in the collection, imputing and sharing of evaluation and impact measurement data
- Agree that certification is valid for three years and renewed through a one-day educational workshop and positive course evaluations



**2018 Program Costs**

RentSmart Educator (Train the Trainer)	\$650 per Community Educator (including CE manual)
Manuals and Certificates	\$50 per RentSmart CE Manual \$25 per RentSmart Certificate participant* \$10 per RentSmart Basics participant
Recertification	\$250 per Community Educator every three years.

*\*Community Partners tend to deliver 2-3 RentSmart courses annually. The average per course RentSmart budget is \$250 for manuals and certificates (based on 10 participants)*

**For more information, contact Sherry Madden at RentSmart Ontario [sherry@rentsmartontario.ca](mailto:sherry@rentsmartontario.ca) or 289-362-4784**