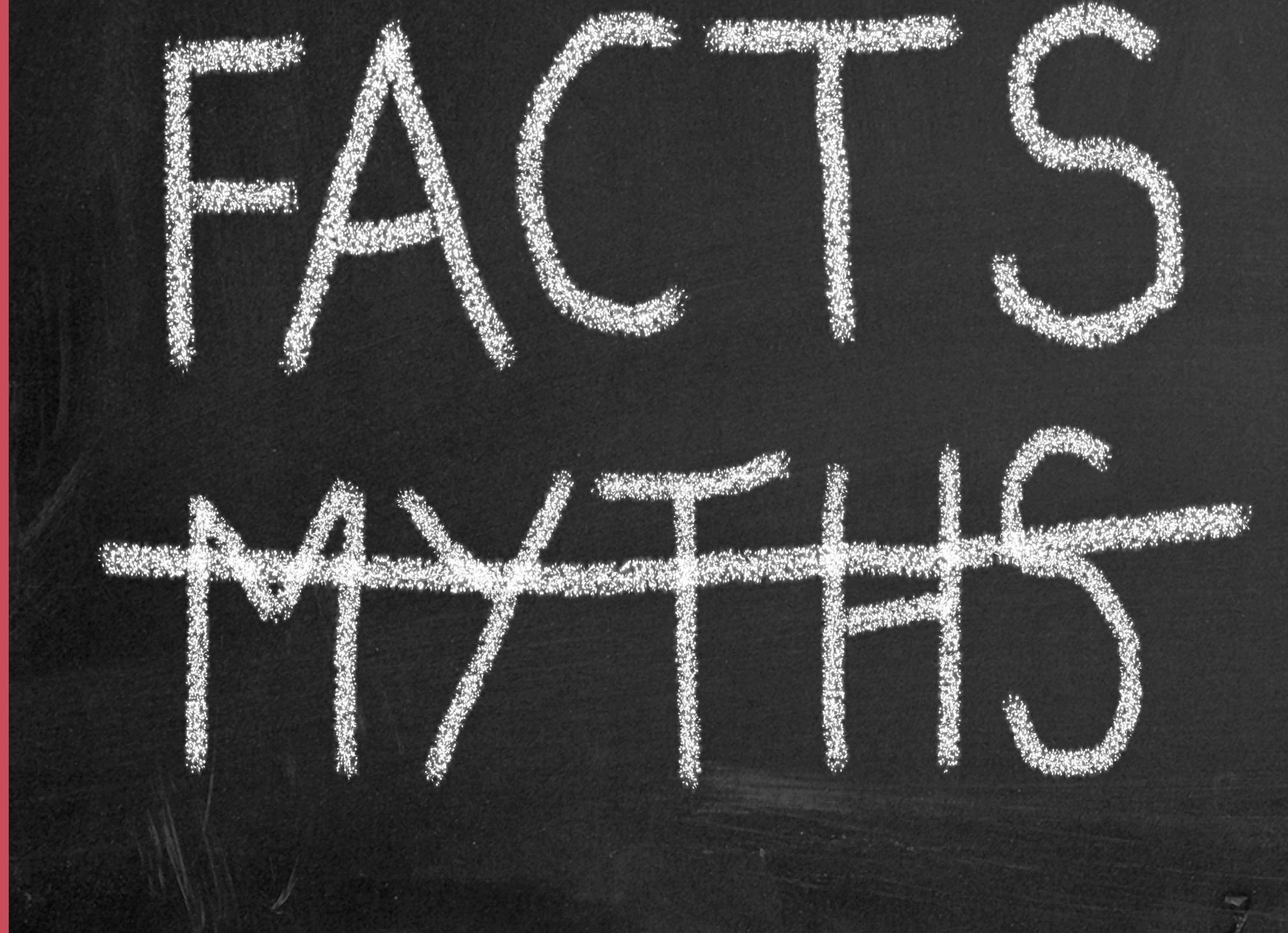


crime myth or fact?

- **Homelessness has been criminalized**
- **Most parolees successfully complete their parole**



Homelessness has been criminalized: myth or fact?

On any given night,
approximately 35,000
Canadians are
homeless



and over 8,700 people
in Toronto experience
homelessness

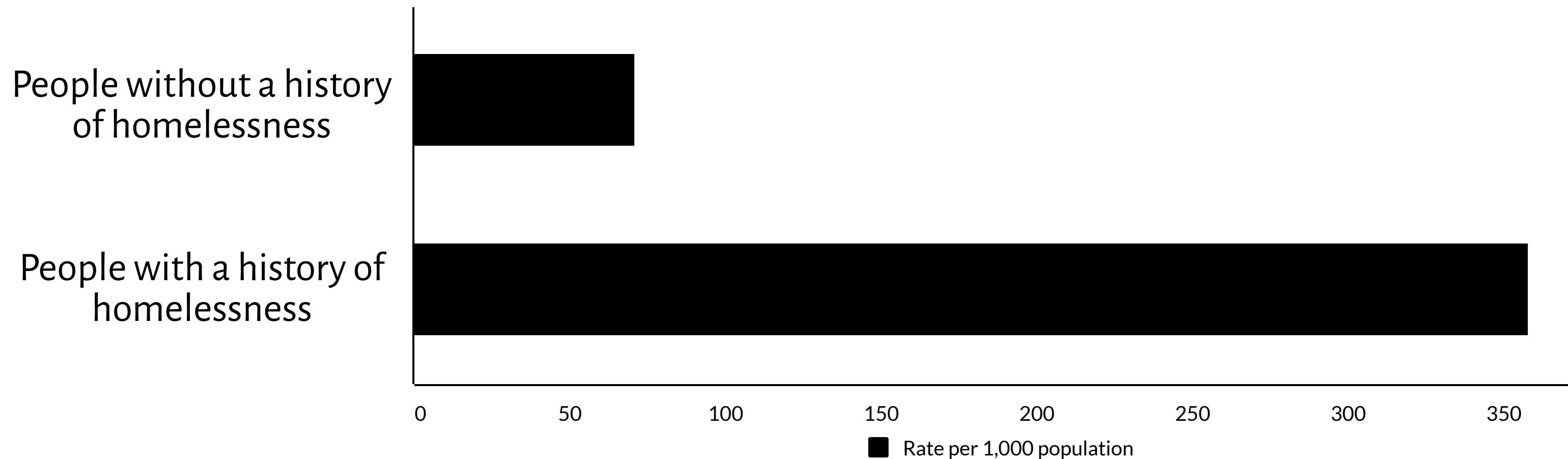
In 2018, racialized people were over-represented in the homeless population in Toronto

Indigenous people represent 2.5% of the Toronto population, compared to 16% of the overall homeless population. 38% of them sleep outside

"People who are homeless are more visible and policed in public spaces, increasing their likelihood of criminal justice interaction."

Closed Quarters Report, John Howard Society, 2019

People with a history of homelessness are more likely to report being a **victim** of a violent crime

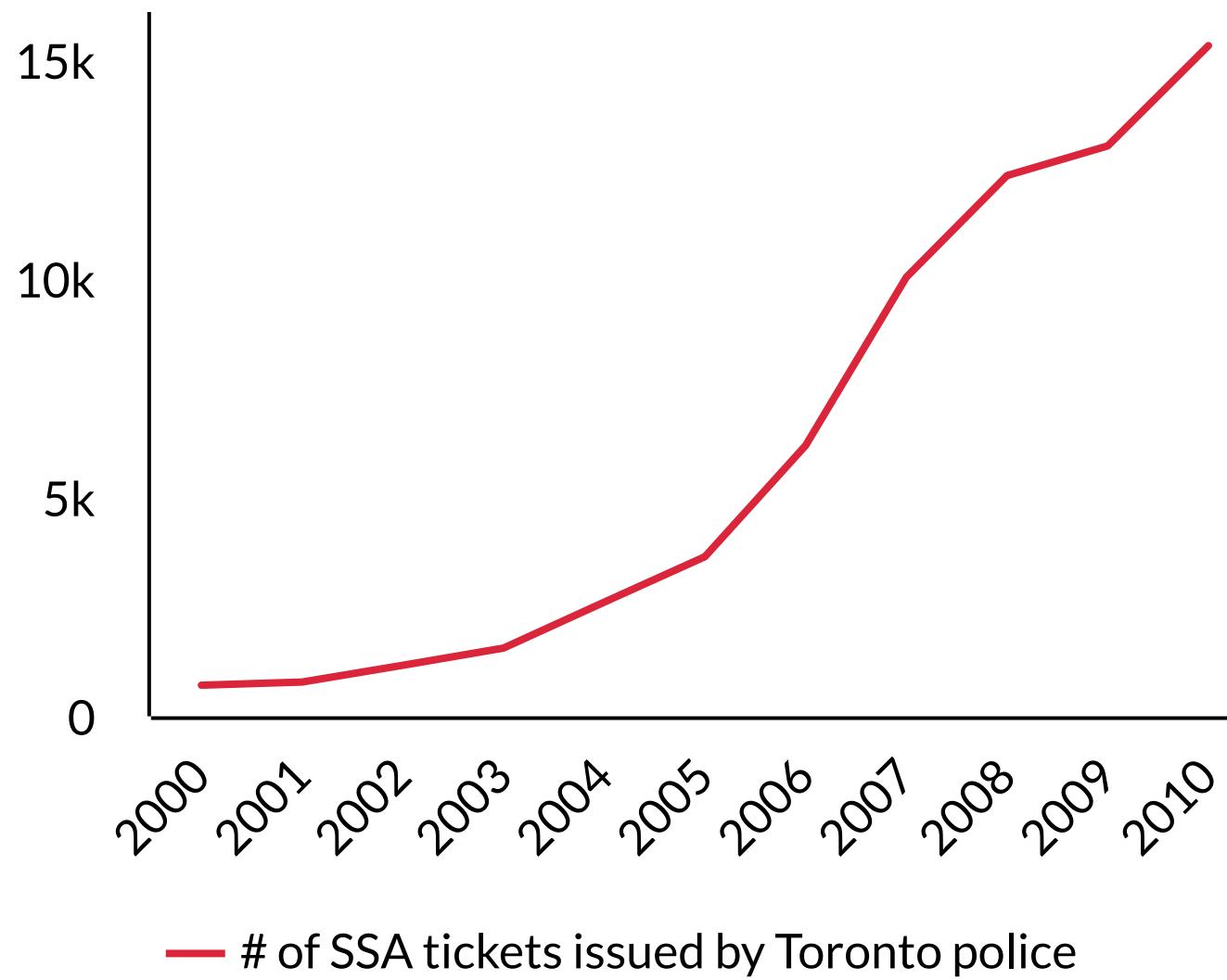


The Ontario Safe Streets Act

"came into effect in 2000 in response to the growing number of visibly homeless individuals in cities across the province [of Ontario] during the 1990s. The SSA is designed to address panhandling, squeegeeing and other forms of solicitation undertaken in an 'aggressive manner ... a manner that is likely to cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety and security'."



The first decade saw a major surge of SSA ticketing



The average ticket fee is



Maximum fee for a first time offence is \$500
& imprisonment up to 6 months with \$1000 fines for future offences

80%
of cases were for
non-aggressive acts
of soliciting someone
at/near a bank, TTC
stop, etc.

Only
2% 
of SSA tickets were
paid between 2013 and
2018 because homeless
people cannot afford to
pay for them

Since COVID-19, ticketing
has increased. It was
reported that several
homeless people in
Toronto were given
\$880
tickets for sitting on
public benches

“[r]ather than promoting public safety, the Safe Streets Act criminalizes people for being poor...This unnecessary and disproportionate punishment creates additional barriers for an already disadvantaged group, especially when other laws exist to address conduct that raises legitimate public safety concerns.”

~ Former Ontario Human Rights Commission's Chief Commissioner,
Renu Mandhane
June 21, 2017