



MEDIA RELEASE

15 April 2015

Community action for 26,000 young homeless Australians

Youth Homelessness Matters Day is a national awareness raising campaign aiming to make youth homelessness an issue we all think, talk and care about.

The National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH), who hosts the online *Youth Homelessness Matters Day* campaign, held on Wednesday 15 April, wants to create a national conversation on youth homelessness to show decision makers that this issue is a priority for the community.

In Australia, 26,000 young people experience homelessness, and many experience stigma which prevents them from seeking help. Many in the community are unaware of the issue with youth homelessness often being hidden, with the majority of young people experiencing homelessness not on the streets, but in accommodation that is unsafe and unstable. This is why a national campaign to raise awareness, inform the public and create solutions is important in ending youth homelessness.

Joanna Siejka, Chair of the NYCH, said, "If everyone in the community knew how their actions could support early intervention for young people experiencing homelessness, then a huge difference could be made in young people's lives, earlier and for the better."

Youth Homelessness Matters Day also seeks to celebrate the resilience of young people who experience homelessness, and to remind the community that it is possible to end youth homelessness if we are all committed to achieving this goal. Ms Siejka said, "Many young people come out the other end with jobs, degrees and families and this shows that an experience of homelessness does not need to limit a person's aspirations."

NYCH asks that the Australian community make ending youth homelessness a priority and show they care by supporting the campaign online.

LIKE the campaign on social media and keep up to date with the events being organised in and around your neighbourhood.

SHARE #yhmd2015 information about *Youth Homelessness Matters Day* as well as fact sheets and tools on how to assist those in need.

ACT by participating in an event organised within your local community and by writing to your local MP about the importance of this issue. Events are happening in each state and territory;

visit www.facebook.com/yhmday or www.youthhomelessnessmatters.info for more information.

Support *Youth Homelessness Matters Day* on Wednesday 15 April and positively influence the lives of young people who are homeless because youth homelessness matters.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

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NYCH has [State and Territory Representatives](#) available for interview

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Background Stats:

- There are 26,000 young people who are homeless each night
- The most common reasons for young people experiencing homelessness include housing crisis, domestic and family violence, and relationship and family breakdown
- Young people experience a higher unemployment rate than other groups, making it more difficult to meet living costs and maintain adequate housing
- Young people under 25 years make up half of the homeless population in Australia
- One of the main factors in preventing young people from seeking help is the stigma associated with experiencing homeless
- One of the main factors in preventing youth homelessness is to recognise young people at risk, and to provide early intervention and support
- Young homeless people need more than just a bed for the night. If they experienced years and years of trauma the support required to get them back on their feet is quite complex.

Campaign Aims:

- Break the common stereotypes that are associated with youth homelessness, and the young people who experience disadvantage
- Engage government and corporate sectors to resource specialist youth homelessness services, also known as youth refuges or shelters, which provide young people with the help they need in order to get back on their feet.
- Ensure that young people have greater access to support and services

What needs to be done to end youth homelessness:

- A whole of community response for homelessness
- We need a national youth strategy, including a youth homeless specific strategy
- Youth homelessness needs to become a public issue to force change at the Government level

Like. Share. Act.

15th April 2015

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