

YNOT State Election Priorities 2024

YNOT calls on the next Tasmanian Government to prioritise our young people by:

1. Appointing a dedicated Minister for Youth in the cabinet to focus on and prioritise issues affecting young Tasmanians aged 12-25.
2. Developing a standalone, coordinated housing and homelessness strategy for children and young people.
3. Completing and investing appropriately in Tasmania's inaugural Youth Jobs Strategy.

1. A Minister for Youth.

YNOT and its members call on the next government to include a dedicated Minister for Youth in its cabinet.

A Minister for Youth will have responsibility for providing a whole of government approach that is inclusive of all young people in Tasmania. It will ensure key priorities for young Tasmanians are at the forefront of government thinking, provide a champion for young people in government policy and will bring Tasmania into line with most other jurisdictions including the Commonwealth.

Why do we need a Minister for Youth?

The ministerial portfolio for Education, Children and Young People is broad in scope and responsibility and doesn't allow for effective oversight of policy and activity relating to all children and young people.

Priorities and issues impacting children and young people are vastly different and often complex in nature, which will require different strategic policy approaches to be effective.

Young Tasmanians have been overlooked in important public policy initiatives recently such as Tasmania's first 20 year Housing Strategy. Better oversight of youth issues in government decision making would ensure young people's needs, health and wellbeing are considered in policy development.

2. A standalone, coordinated housing and homelessness strategy for children and young people.

YNOT and its members call for the development of a dedicated, coordinated housing and homelessness strategy for Tasmania's children and young people.

Young Tasmanians need targeted, age appropriate responses to meet their housing needs across the continuum: from unaccompanied homeless children under the age of 16 who require a care and housing response; to young people accessing specialist homelessness services, through to those who now face homelessness because they are unable to break into the private rental market.

Why do we need a targeted approach?

39% of Tasmania's homeless population is under the age of 25 years[1].

Children and young people are impacted most by homelessness in our State. Experiencing homelessness early in life increases the risk of homelessness over the course of their life. Young people face significant vulnerabilities and are at increased risk of harm, abuse and exploitation when they do not have a safe home.

The only effective way to end youth homelessness is to ensure there is a pathway for all young Tasmanians to be securely housed, supported by a sustainable, coordinated and robust service system. This pathway does not currently exist.

Despite recent investment in youth homelessness initiatives, youth homelessness services are at breaking point. Many are overwhelmed by the current demand for service, the increasing complexity of issues experienced by young people accessing services, and the lack of resources and support available for workers and young people.

3. Complete and invest appropriately in Tasmania's inaugural Youth Jobs Strategy.

YNOT and its members call on the next government to commit to continuing the good work of developing the state's first youth jobs strategy.

Development of the strategy to date has incorporated the views of young people, industry, community sector, university, VET and government agencies. This work has been building momentum over the past year.

The next government should continue this work to ensure that all young Tasmanians are well equipped and supported to transition from education into the world of work or further education and training.

Why it is needed.

In 2022, Tasmania had lower than average Year 12 attainment rates with only 53% of students completing Year 12, compared to the national average[2].

Career guidance from school to work for young people and industry is not working. Young Tasmanians continue to have the lowest employment, education, and training participation rates in the nation and do not feel equipped to enter the workforce.

Tasmania's workforce is ageing. Over the next 15 years, over 100,000 workers will exit the labour force due to retirement[3].

References

[1] Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021). Census of Population and Housing. Australian Government.

[2] Productivity Commission (2024). Report on Government Services 2024: Part B: Child care, education and training, Section 4. School education. Australian Government. Accessed 26 February 2024. <https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services>.

[3] Denny, L. (2023). Youth Jobs Strategy Submission to Discussion Paper Oct 23.

https://www.youthjobsstrategy.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/497422/Submission_No.4_-_Lisa_Denny.pdf