

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 18 April 2018

Young people over represented in the State's homeless population

With over 400 young Tasmanians aged 12-24 years currently homeless, YNOT is calling for action on Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD).

YHMD is a national awareness raising campaign that encourages all Australians to take a stand against youth homelessness in our communities.

The National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH), who hosts the online Youth Homelessness Matters Day campaign, want to generate a national conversation about youth homelessness to show decision makers that this issue is a priority for the community in the lead up to Youth Homelessness Matters Day on Wednesday, 18 April.

In Australia, there are 28,000 young people aged 12 to 24 who are homeless each night and an alarming 38% of our total homeless population is under 25 years old.

Despite the large numbers of young people experiencing homelessness, there is not currently a national plan to address youth homelessness in Australia. This means there is not a strategic or long term approach to addressing this national crisis affecting our young people.

Youth Network of Tasmania CEO Tania Hunt said "We need to address the systemic issues that drive and exacerbate youth homelessness and we urge political leaders to commit to a national plan to end youth homelessness."

In Tasmania, half of all homelessness service clients are under 25 years of age. Young people and children are the fastest growing cohort of homeless people in the State.

"Young people continue to be disproportionately represented in the homelessness population in Tasmania. This is clearly unacceptable and more needs to be done to ensure that our young people have access to affordable, appropriate, safe and secure housing." Ms Hunt said.

Family violence and family breakdown continue to be the two main reasons young people report being homeless.

"There is a common misconception in the community that young people choose to leave home and live independently but the reality is that many young people don't have a choice. Living at home is just not a safe option for them." Ms Hunt said.

"It's really important to raise community awareness about this issue as a large proportion of young people experiencing homelessness are hidden from view and are couch surfing, living in overcrowded situations or in cars and tents."

One of the most vulnerable groups experiencing homelessness in Tasmania is young people aged 12-15 years, with appropriate and integrated housing and care options currently not available.



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ynot is the peak body representing the voice of Tasmanian youth

To mark Youth Homelessness Matters Day YNOT will be participating in a forum to discuss challenges and solutions for unaccompanied homeless children in Tasmania. The forum 'Who cares? Unaccompanied Homeless Children in Tasmania' will bring together those committed to ending homelessness for unaccompanied children in the State.

ENDS

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For Further information

www.facebook.com/yhmday

www.youthhomelessnessmatters.net

#YHMD2018 on social media

Background Information:

- 38% of the homelessness population is under 25 years old
- 28,000 young Australians between 12 – 25 years old are experiencing homelessness every night
- More than 70% of the young people seeking assistance from homelessness services across Australia need help with family violence and family breakdown.
- The first and most common way young people experience homelessness is couch surfing

#YHMD Campaign Goals

- *Break stereotypes* – Breaking the stigma that young people leave home because they want to, addressing the causes of youth homelessness such as negative home environments and encouraging young people experiencing homelessness to seek support.
- *Engaging government, community and business* – to resource specialist youth homelessness services like youth shelters.
- *Asking for a national plan for addressing youth homelessness* – Youth homelessness needs a strategic approach at a national level to ensure support for young people at every stage from early intervention to crisis support.

Campaign Asks

LIKE.

Give us a thumbs up on Facebook and have young people's stories as well as campaign updates and countdown delivered right to your newsfeed. Follow the hashtag **#YHMD2018** on twitter and keep posted on events organised throughout Australia. **facebook.com/yhmday & #YHMD2018 on Twitter and Instagram**

SHARE.

Break stereotypes that are associated with youth homelessness by sharing stories, statistics and information on social media and with your network. **facebook.com/yhmday & #YHMD2018 on twitter and Instagram**

ACT.

Pledge your support by signing up to our Thunderclap Campaign. Host an event and help us raise awareness about youth homelessness. Write to your local MP about the importance of this issue. Contact your local newspaper and let them know what's happening in your area. **youthhomelessnessmatters.info**