

10 April 2025

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **The reality is Australia is experiencing a youth homelessness crisis**

**Youth Homelessness Matters Day - 16<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD) is fast approaching. For 19 years, this day has been raising awareness about the issues and realities of children and young people experiencing and at risk of homelessness. We want to ensure it is high on the public agenda and drive change with federal state and territory governments.

“We know what needs to happen to make change for children and young people experiencing homelessness. Australia’s youth homelessness sector is working together to achieve results. We need governments and the community to recognise we all need to band together to solve the issue. It’s the time for governments to bring the rhetoric to an end. It’s time to plan for and adequately fund solutions to end youth homelessness,” said Yfoundations CEO John Macmillan.

The day is organised by Yfoundations with support from state and territory representatives from youth homelessness organisations. This year sees service providers unite with the property and building industry and the media and advertising sector to raise awareness of child and youth homelessness. This collaboration is representative of the community needing to come together with to drive change and solve the issue.

Despite a quarter of the homeless population being between 10-24 years old, child and youth homelessness is a largely invisible issue. Over 43,000 children and young people (under the age of 25) presented alone to specialist homelessness services, but this does not capture the thousands who did not present to services. Those who stayed in alternative arrangements including couch surfing, on the streets, with friends/extended family and improvised dwellings who didn’t seek assistance aren’t included in this figure.

Specialist homelessness services that support unattended children and young people are severely underfunded, so half those 15–24-year-olds presenting to services are turned away every night because they cannot be accommodated. This is traumatic for the young people presenting, front line workers and service providers.

There is an urgent need for more action. The national and state and territory governments need to step up and make young people a priority and tackle the issue of child and youth homelessness. This is an entirely achievable task. The Queensland Government’s Towards Ending Homelessness for Young Queenslanders is currently the only stand-alone youth strategy in Australia and shows what can be achieved where child and youth homelessness is given the priority and investment that is needed.

Similar investments are required in every state and territory, tied to a national strategy that makes ending youth homelessness a national priority and dedicates the resources needed to achieve this objective. Without this leadership, children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness, will continue to be denied the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Children and young people experiencing homelessness have different needs to adults that need to be provided for. Placing them into adult services does not cater to these specific needs and can leave them exposed to unsafe environments. It's time to stop the adultification of young people and fund the services that effectively respond to their experience of homelessness.

Children and young people experiencing homelessness need more than a bed. The majority have been victims of domestic and family violence. Approximately half have mental health concerns. A third of children and young people experiencing homelessness are Indigenous. Young people need living skills development and support, along with a safe place to live to ensure they achieve their full potential.

Young people who reach their full potential are an asset to Australia economically and socially. State, territory and federal governments have a responsibility to invest in solutions to work towards ending youth homelessness and to adequately resource these services on an ongoing basis.

We're urging the Australian public to donate to child and youth homelessness services, so they have the resources to supply more services and sign the petition calling on national, state and territory governments to make ending child and youth homelessness a national priority by developing a targeted plan and funding the services needed to achieve this objective. Both can be done at [yhmd.org.au](http://yhmd.org.au)

**For media comment:**

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Yfoundations can help put you in contact  
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