

Yfoundations
Annual Report
2024-25

Acknowledgements

In the spirit of reconciliation, Yfoundations acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

We celebrate diversity in all forms and believe diversity among our staff makes **Yfoundations** a more effective organisation.

We are a proud member of ACON's Welcome Here Project and support the three project commitments:

- We **welcome** and include LGBTQ+ people.
- We **create** positive change in our local community.
- We **celebrate** LGBTQ+ diversity.

Yfoundations acknowledges that our efforts towards inclusivity and solidarity must be ongoing and always evolving. We always welcome feedback from the sector and community members.

Thank you to all the workers striving to create a future without youth homelessness.



Contents

About us	4
Our Vision. Our Purpose. Our Values	5
Organisational Strategy	6
President's Report	7
CEO's Report	8
Youth Homelessness Representative Council	9
Advocacy and Policy	11
Partnerships, Networks and Committees	16
Youth Homelessness Matters Day - Young and Alone	18
Sector Workforce Development Project	21
Youth Justice SHS Capacity Building Project	23
Good Practice Guidelines	24
Health Training	25
Communications and Media	26
Media Coverage	28
Our Team	30
Our Board	31
Financial Overview	32
Thank You	34



About Us

Yfoundations is the NSW peak body advocating for children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness, and the services that provide direct support to them. We are proudly a membership-based organisation with a network of around 60 organisations across NSW and the rest of Australia. Yfoundations aims to create a future without child and youth homelessness by advocating for children and young people at risk of, experiencing or who have previously experienced homelessness on their own.

For over 45 years, Yfoundations has been an authority on youth homelessness, working collaboratively with members, NGOs (non-government organisations), our partner peaks, government departments, the private sector and community members to provide advocacy, sector development, policy advice, health training, and research to lead the change to end child and youth homelessness in NSW and throughout Australia.

Yfoundations provides a voice for young people with lived experience of homelessness. Our Youth Homelessness Representative Council is a group of 10 young people (aged 18-25 years) with lived experiences of homelessness and a passion to improve young people's lives. They meet regularly to discuss and act on issues affecting children and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The overall aim of the YHRC is to provide them with a platform to voice concerns and ideas on issues that matter to them from their experiences of homelessness.

Yfoundations advises the government on areas to prioritise, including highlighting funding gaps, leading and promoting projects to gain insights and understanding, consulting with the youth homelessness sector to reflect their concerns and priorities, and filling potential knowledge and service gaps. We also work to keep our members informed and up to date on government policies, evaluations and changes that directly impact the sector.

Our advocacy includes representations to governments and ministers. We continue to call on the Australian Government to develop a dedicated National Child and Youth Homelessness and Housing Plan that responds to the diversity and complexity of children and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. This plan will provide a roadmap for a collaborative and integrated whole-of-government and whole-of-community response towards preventing youth homelessness, intervening early before young people become entrenched in homelessness and disadvantage, and providing evidenced-based good practice responses to children and young people experiencing homelessness.

Yfoundations works to raise awareness in the community and increase support and understanding of child and youth homelessness, including work to reduce stigma and educate the community about false assumptions and misleading narratives. Youth Homelessness Matters Day is our key annual national campaign, which we promote in collaboration with youth homelessness services and other relevant and interested organisations.

Yfoundations presents at conferences, forums and events to raise awareness of our work, child and youth homelessness, and what we can do to end it. Yfoundations is also frequently called on by media outlets to speak about youth homelessness.

We celebrate diversity in all forms and believe diversity among our staff and Board makes Yfoundations a more effective and inclusive organisation. We always welcome feedback from the sector and community on our work and efforts towards inclusivity and solidarity. We acknowledge that this work is ongoing and must continuously evolve.

As a proud member of ACON's Welcome Here Project, Yfoundations welcomes and celebrates lesbian, gay, bi, trans, intersex, queer, questioning, asexual and other gender or sexuality diverse people (LGBTIQ+). Yfoundations publicly demonstrates its support for the LGBTIQ+ community and actively promotes a prejudice-free and discrimination-free space.

The name 'Yfoundations' reflects the fundamental principle on which our work is based. We believe an essential key to ending youth homelessness is supporting the growth and development of all children and young people through the following five foundations: safety and stability, home and place, health and wellness, connections and participation, and education and employment. Each foundation represents an important component of a child's and young person's developmental process.

Our Vision

To create a future without child and youth homelessness in Australia.

Our Purpose

To lead the change to end child and youth homelessness in NSW and throughout Australia through collaboration with our members, young people and stakeholders.

Our Values



Authenticity

We are genuine about our passion for impactful change and transparent about our work and decision making.



People Centred

The experience of children and young people, and our members, are at the heart of our work to empower change.



Inclusive

We value and implement the expertise and wisdom of diverse cultures, experiences and perspectives.



Collaborative

We work with our members, young people, government and other stakeholders.



Fearless

We are bold in our fight to end child and youth homelessness.

Organisational Strategy

Our 2024-2029 Strategic Plan is dedicated to leading systemic change to end child and youth homelessness in NSW and across Australia. Grounded in collaboration with our members, young people and key stakeholders, our approach is guided by five core values: authenticity, people-centred, inclusive, collaborative and fearless.

Our strategy focuses on three key objectives.

Strategic Objective 1

Drive advocacy to achieve an increased focus and investment in responses to end child and youth homelessness.

The public is exposed to information about child and youth homelessness and how it can be addressed.

The need for specialised responses to child and youth homelessness is reflected in government policy, strategy and investment.

Strategic Objective 2

Harness the expertise of members and young people with lived experience of homelessness to guide our role in policy and system reform.

Yfoundations policy and advocacy is informed by evidence, sector expertise and lived experience.

Strategic Objective 3

Support members to deliver quality homelessness and housing services for children and young people experiencing homelessness.

Members have access to, and the opportunity to share, information and resources to support good practice.

Through these efforts, we aim to create a future where no child or young person in Australia experiences homelessness.

President's Report

As the President of Yfoundations, I am pleased to deliver the Yfoundations Annual Report for the financial year 2024–2025.

This year has been a time of change for Yfoundations, as evidenced in this report. At the same time, it has continued to be a year of unfaltering commitment and hard work. The need for peak bodies like Yfoundations to advocate for the needs of children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness, and the services that support them, is acute.

Combined with the housing and cost of living crises that disproportionately and adversely affect children and young people, the lack of commitment and concrete action from governments to make ending child and youth homelessness a priority has remained a major concern. While we have been encouraged by recognition from the Australian Government that children and young people who experience homelessness have distinct needs, and by the stated commitment of the NSW Government to develop a youth specific homelessness action plan, much more needs to be done to ensure children and young people get the support and accommodation they need to flourish and realise their full potential.

The release of the Yfoundations Strategic Plan 2024–29 this year has reaffirmed our commitment to supporting and harnessing the expertise of our members to strive towards achieving our vision of a future without child and youth homelessness in Australia.

Under the leadership of our new CEO, John Macmillan, and joined by our new Head of Policy and Advocacy, Anna Schinella, the Yfoundations team has demonstrated this commitment through the effective engagement of members in policy development, submission writing, advocacy and campaign activities. We have made significant and rewarding enhancements to the way we communicate with and keep the youth homelessness sector informed, and we have reinvigorated our focus on providing practical supports to our members.

We are grateful for our new partnership with the Property Industry Foundation and UnLtd, which has enabled the delivery of the Youth Homelessness Matters Every Day – Young and Alone campaign. The significant reach of the campaign in terms of community awareness raising about the realities of child and youth homelessness in Australia, which exceeded 21.4 million people in its first week alone, is incredible. This is a major milestone in the ongoing challenge to have the needs of children and young people at risk properly recognised and prioritised.

I wish to thank the staff at Yfoundations throughout the year for this and the many other achievements detailed in this report. I have every confidence they will build on this and I look forward to seeing the progress and results of initiatives they will be working on in the coming year.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank the directors who serve on the Yfoundations board. They have continued to play a crucial role in the governance and in setting the strategic direction of this organisation. As volunteers, our board members frequently dedicate significant time and energy without financial compensation, bringing diverse expertise and passion to the table, contributing to informed decision-making and ensuring Yfoundations stays true to its mission. As in previous years, their leadership and oversight has helped guide the organisation's sustainability, accountability and effectiveness over this year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nerida'.

Nerida Ackerman
President
Yfoundations

CEO's Report

As the newly-appointed CEO at Yfoundations since February this year, it is a great privilege to present the Yfoundations 2024–25 Annual Report.

Throughout this year we continued to consistently and passionately represent and advocate for children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness, and the services that provide direct support to them. We increased the profile of child and youth homelessness, renewed our engagement and collaboration with member services and stakeholders, and built on our sector development work and resources, all while negotiating a period of significant change, including farewelling our former CEO Trish Connolly in late 2024. I am immensely proud to lead a dedicated team who have achieved so much over the year.

This has been a year of many opportunities and challenges in the youth homelessness space. We ensured that the voices of young people and our members have been represented at the table of a range of government policy developments and initiatives within NSW and nationally.

Our work has been underpinned by the new Yfoundations Strategic Plan 2024–29, which places harnessing the expertise of our members and the lived experience of the Youth Homelessness Representative Council (YHRC) at the heart of everything we do.

Emphasising this commitment, we proudly established a number of working groups comprising members over the course of the year to deliver significant position papers on the NSW Government's reform of the Temporary Accommodation Program and on the need for investment in youth housing models, which continues to drive our policy and advocacy agenda.

The YHRC met with the CEO of Homes NSW and parliamentarians, presenting their informative and thought-provoking position paper on what constitutes a 'home' for a young person who has experienced homelessness. These seminal pieces of work have been major inputs to our submissions to government.

We have focused on obtaining the views of our members at our General Meetings to inform our work and priorities, policy, advocacy and projects.

Another significant focus of our advocacy work over this year has been on ensuring the forthcoming commissioning of specialist homelessness services in NSW is appropriately informed by the needs of children and young people and the challenges experienced by the youth homelessness sector given increased demand, limited resourcing and low to no housing stock for young people.

While the government's decision to not subject the sector to an unnecessary and divisive competitive tendering process for core services was a welcome change, we continued to provide feedback to government and highlight the pitfalls of its decision to not provide much needed additional funding for service providers.

On the campaign front, this has been an exciting year with the establishment of a new partnership with the Property Industry Foundation and social purpose organisation, UnLtd, to help us significantly grow Youth Homelessness Matters Day, taking it further with Youth Homelessness Matters Every Day.

We received significant pro bono work from creative agency Ogilvy to produce the Young and Alone campaign assets, including video, outdoor advertising, TV spots, cinema advertising and social media. PHD secured a major media campaign worth \$3 million. Over the first week of the release of Young and Alone in June, over 21.4 million Australians had viewed the campaign assets, the majority of whom are unlikely to have previously been exposed to the realities of youth homelessness.

We are immensely proud of the members of the YHRC who have provided ongoing guidance on the development of the Young and Alone videos and made a major contribution to the Young and Alone media campaign.

With new funding from the NSW Government in 2024–25 we renewed our focus on sector development under the Industry and Workforce Development program. Establishing



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John Macmillan
CEO
Yfoundations

communities of practice focused on supporting workers in regional areas, and workers with lived experience of homelessness, were key pieces of work, which received praise from participants and upon which we will continue to build. Completing our comprehensive new online training resources on working with young people who use violence at the end of 2024–25 is the culmination of several years of work developing resources to support the sector and is scheduled for launch on 1 July 2025.

Reflecting on the hard work of our team, I believe Yfoundations has established a secure and purposeful future moving into 2025–26. I want to acknowledge and thank our amazing members for their unfaltering commitment and dedication to supporting children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness, a commitment that continues to energise and inspire me every day.

A huge thank you to the hard-working and dedicated team at Yfoundations, and for the support and commitment of the Yfoundations Board.

Youth Homelessness Representative Council

The Youth Homelessness Representative Council (YHRC) brings together proactive, passionate young people whose lived experience, expertise and voices inform and strengthen Yfoundations' youth homelessness policy and advocacy for NSW.

This year, our Youth Homelessness Representative Council has amplified the voices of young people, driving change through powerful advocacy, informing policy and high-profile campaigns.

From developing the 'What is a home' position paper and hosting a youth-led drop-in at NSW Parliament during Homelessness Week, to sharing their stories on national media and at major events, YHRC members have shaped the Young and Alone campaign, strengthened Youth Homelessness Matters Day and influenced decision makers across government and industry.

Their passion, insight and generosity in sharing deeply personal experiences have brought authenticity and urgency to the fight to end child and youth homelessness.

YHRC's work

The YHRC continued to embed the voices of lived experience and expertise into Yfoundations' campaigns, events and policy work.

During Homelessness Week 2024, the YHRC held a meeting in Sydney focusing on 'home' and the well-being of young people. They worked on a position paper explaining the difference between housing and 'home', discussed resilience and mental health for young people experiencing homelessness, and met with special guests, Rebecca Pinkstone, CEO of Homes NSW, and Chris Gambian, CEO of Australians for Mental Health.

During the same week, five YHRC members, YHRC alumni, Yfoundations' staff, and a youth worker from Detour House met with politicians in Parliament to discuss the needs of young people through a youth-led Youth Homelessness Drop-in.

The YHRC co-designed and advised on the Young and Alone campaign (more on that further in the report), sharing personal stories with our creative agency, reviewing campaign materials



for authenticity, and participating in national media coverage.

YHRC members also engaged in a two-day face-to-face workshop in Sydney to develop skills in advocacy and media engagement, and contributed directly to policy discussions in a consultation with Dr Catherine Robinson from the University of Tasmania on supported accommodation models for unaccompanied children and young people.

Across the year, the YHRC's insight, leadership, and lived experience and expertise continued to influence government, sector and public understanding of youth homelessness in NSW. The YHRC participated and featured in extensive news and media coverage throughout the year in response to a range of issues impacting youth homelessness. This coverage is highlighted in the Communications and Media section of this Annual Report.

Featured activities and events

Homelessness Week 2024 meeting

An inspiring gathering in Sydney focused on the themes of home, resilience and mental health for young people. Members engaged in thoughtful discussions with guest speakers Rebecca Pinkstone (CEO, Homes NSW) and Chris Gambian (CEO, Australians for Mental Health), bringing lived experience to the forefront of sector conversations.

Homelessness Week 2024 Youth-Led Drop-in at NSW Parliament

Facilitated by Hon. Dr Sarah Kaine MLC, YHRC members took their advocacy directly to MPs, senators and ministers, speaking powerfully about housing and wellbeing for young people. Their courage and authenticity created a meaningful exchange with decision-makers. We were pleased that Yfoundations and the YHRC were acknowledged by Minister Jackson

Youth Homelessness Representative Council



and the Speaker in question time in the Legislative Assembly.

Young and Alone creative agency briefing (Sep 2024)

Maja Rathouski and Dominique Rose generously shared their first-hand experiences of youth homelessness with our creative agency Ogilvy to help them shape the creative approach to the Young and Alone campaign.

Tour de PIF for Homeless Youth 2024 (13 Sep 2024)

Before an audience of 700, Ari Kallistos spoke with honesty and conviction, helping to secure the largest donation of the day. Ari's words left a lasting impression on attendees and underscored the urgency of the cause.

Young and Alone media briefing (Nov 2024)

Kylan Orcher's deeply personal account inspired \$3 million in donated media to support the campaign, demonstrating the impact of lived experience on driving national awareness and commitment.

Face-to-face workshop (Feb 2025)

Members came together for two days of professional development, gaining valuable skills in advocacy (with Charmaine Jones from Justice and Equity Centre) and media engagement (with Phoebe Netto from Pure Public Relations). They also contributed to a consultation on supported accommodation models for unaccompanied children and young

people with Dr Catherine Robinson from the University of Tasmania.

Property Industry Foundation Breakfast Forum (24 Mar 2025)

Maja delivered a moving speech in the lead-up to Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD), capturing the attention of industry leaders and inspiring action to address youth homelessness.

NINE Radio (24 Mar 2025)

Maja, Natasha Ransford and Jennifer Zerafa shared their stories in heartfelt interviews that formed a compelling and emotive radio campaign, powerfully supporting YHMD's message and reach.

Parity article (Apr 2025)

Jae Valencia shared her story with Simon Byrnes, Yfoundations Lived Experience Coordinator, in an insightful and powerful article, 'You can't have good mental health without a home' for the youth homelessness edition of *Parity*, 'The Future Starts Here'.

Service site visit with the Hon. Rose Jackson MLC for Youth Homelessness Matters Day (16 April 2025)

At Caretakers Cottage, Jennifer shared her journey from homelessness to higher education, providing a powerful and personal perspective that highlighted the transformative impact of housing and support.

7th National Housing and Homelessness Forum (15 May 2025)
Ari, Jennifer, Maja, Zaw Ye Htike and

former YHRC member Brendan Brest participated in a lived experience panel discussion facilitated by Simon Byrnes on 'Building homes, not just houses and ensuring safe, secure and supportive housing for young people'. The panel discussed young people's housing needs that make a home feel safe, secure and supportive, and youth-led insights on housing design for a truly sustainable home for young people.

Disrupt Festival (27 May 2025)

Disrupt was a one-night celebration of the creativity of young people who have experienced homelessness, presented in collaboration with Yfoundations and the Foyer Foundation. Jennifer and Zaw submitted art works that were featured at the event.

Launch of Young and Alone (18 Jun 2025)

The national launch was strengthened by the generosity of Natasha, Maja, Jennifer and Ari who shared their lived experiences with professionalism, insight and authenticity. Their contributions ensured the campaign resonated widely, helping to elevate the issue of youth homelessness in the national conversation.

YHRC Members

Current

Nick Barker (YHMD Ambassador)
Korrine-Lee Hellier-Bartholomew
Ari Kallistos (Co-chair)
Gypsy McHugh
Kylan Orcher
Natasha Ransford (YHMD Ambassador)
Marija 'Maja' Rathouski (Chair)
Jordan 'Jae' Valencia (Yfoundations Ambassador)
Jennifer Zerafa
Shirley (Jia Rong) Zhuang
Zaw Ye Htike

Retired

Mischa Browne
James Cady
Hope Kyd
Dominique Rose

Advocacy and Policy

Increased engagement and consultation with our member base to inform our policy and advocacy work was a major focus for Yfoundations throughout the year. This was to ensure our work reflected the challenges and needs of the sector and highlighted the realities of unaccompanied children and young people experiencing homelessness. It also reflected our renewed commitment to providing the best possible advocacy services and supports to our members.

The shifting imperatives of government in the commissioning, funding, policy and program spaces – shifts that created some uncertainty, additional challenges and increased demands on the sector – made this work and process even more critical. Yfoundations played a pivotal role in identifying and communicating issues and concerns back to government through our advocacy, submissions and policy activities to influence announced changes and address sector concerns.

Submissions and representations to government

In 2024–25, Yfoundations made the following submissions:

- to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee on the National Housing and Homelessness Plan Bill 2024 (No. 2)
- to the Australian Government Treasury on the \$1 billion Increase to the National Housing Infrastructure Facility
- to the NSW Government on the Reform of the Temporary Accommodation Program in NSW – position and background papers
- to the NSW Government on Youth Housing Models – position and background papers
- to the NSW Government on the Special Liability Insurance Scheme
- NSW Pre-Budget Submission 2025–26
- to Homes NSW on its Discussion paper to inform the Homes for NSW Plan for the coming 10 years
- Federal Pre-Budget Submission 2025–26
- submission to the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025–2035.

We also commenced our response to the Fair Work Commission Gender-

based undervaluation – priority awards review of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010 (the SCHADS Award).

Yfoundations delivered the position papers on the reform of temporary accommodation and on youth housing models to inform the NSW Government’s policy and budget objectives, and provide resources to support youth SHS that were considering seeking funding under the Homelessness Innovation Fund. These position papers and the background papers that informed them were developed with the valuable input of working groups of our members and the views of our Youth Homelessness Representative Council (YHRC) members, and we thank them all for their support and contribution.

A significant focus towards the end of 2024 was our advocacy surrounding the Special Liability Insurance Scheme (SLIS), which was implemented from 1 January 2025. The SLIS posed considerable financial challenges to youth homelessness service providers. Yfoundations collected information from our members about the impact of the scheme on service delivery and incorporated that information into a position paper provided to the state government in the lead up to the implementation. We will continue to monitor the impact of the scheme in consultation with our members.

A core focus of our submissions to both the Australian and state governments has been providing solutions to address the specific needs of children and young people experiencing and at risk of homelessness, particularly investment in youth supported housing solutions to address the lack of options available to young people exiting crisis accommodation, while maintaining

and adequately funding crisis responses and youth homelessness service providers overall.

We explored the relative merits of different models of youth-specific supported housing in the context of the government’s reform, policy and strategic objectives; highlighted the need for a more flexible and innovative approach to social housing to include youth housing models; and recommended quarantining a portion of new social housing for this purpose and providing increased investment to enable the provision of medium-term and transitional housing stock for youth supported housing.

We advocated for the Australian Government to:

- broaden the scope for the proposed National Housing and Homelessness Act, recognising that the solution to child and youth homelessness requires a focus on a range of systemic issues that lead and/or contribute to child and youth homelessness
- fund the design and delivery of a national child and youth homelessness and housing action plan
- review the method of indexation applied under the National Agreement on Social Housing and Homelessness to ensure homelessness funding keeps pace with the real costs of homelessness service delivery
- reverse the shortfall in crisis and transitional accommodation by substantial new investment in this area for young people experiencing homelessness.

We also advocated for the NSW Government to:

- ensure its intended reforms of the Temporary Accommodation Program meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness

Advocacy and Policy

- apply key principles (identified by Yfoundations) to guide its assessment of all proposals that include the delivery of temporary accommodation to young people aged 16 to 24 years
- increase SHS Program and Homeless Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) funding by 50%
- provide funding to the youth SHS sector to enable the provision of specialised responses to children and young people experiencing domestic and family violence
- adequately address the rising cost of service provision through indexation and other mechanisms
- ensure the resourcing of crisis-driven responses is not diverted or compromised to support early intervention and prevention measures
- fund the development and implementation of the NSW Child and Youth Homelessness Action Plan.

While we continue to be encouraged by the NSW Government's commitment to develop a child and youth homelessness action plan, disappointingly, neither the federal nor the state budget included any funding commitment to implementing such a plan at the national or state levels.

Our position paper on the reforms of the Temporary Accommodation Program explored and articulated the relative merits of different models of youth-specific supported temporary accommodation in the context of the NSW Government's reform objectives and the principles identified for investment in this area.

The announcement of the \$1 billion National Housing Infrastructure Facility (NHIF) program was an important step towards increasing the supply of crisis and transitional housing across Australia. Yfoundations engaged in ongoing discussions with Homes NSW to ensure young people were prioritised in the state's approach to this funding opportunity. We continued to advocate for youth-specific housing solutions and encouraged our members to consider how they could leverage this initiative.

Our response to the Homes NSW Discussion Paper reinforced the need for an innovative approach to

youth housing models within broader homelessness reforms. We reiterated this in our submission to the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035, highlighting the strategy and the government's commitment to develop and implement a NSW child and youth homelessness and housing action plan as a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make a meaningful and lasting impact on child and youth homelessness in this state.

We highlighted the need to prioritise unaccompanied children and young people experiencing homelessness, and for targeted measures and targeted increased investment to significantly address the unique systemic, economic and social drivers of child and youth homelessness and reduce the numbers of children and young people cycling into and through homelessness.

We also supported the expansion of an Aboriginal-led homelessness and housing sector, adding that solutions to Aboriginal homelessness need to be co-designed with Aboriginal experts, practitioners and leaders, and informed by Aboriginal people with lived experience of homelessness; Aboriginal community-controlled services should be supported and resourced to deliver and manage these solutions; and the expansion of an Aboriginal-led sector requires increased and dedicated resources, planning and time.

We also repeatedly advocated in our submissions that while a Housing First approach, which has been the focus of this government in addressing homelessness, is an effective adult homelessness response, it is not always the right response for young people. We identified the potential for adapting Housing First principles to respond to the broader needs of children and young people who experience homelessness. However, the intrinsic need for greater investment in appropriate housing models needs to be acknowledged and addressed to enable a true Housing First approach for all.

Our submissions are available in the Resources hub on our website at www.yfoundations.org.au/resources

All this work has been informed by increased and ongoing discussions and consultation with our members; the establishment of working groups comprising our members on areas of expertise, with representation from diverse member service providers across the state; and through our YHRC.

We have also continued the call for a standalone National Child and Youth Homelessness and Housing Plan through our Youth Homelessness Matters Day campaign, petition and presentations on a range of platforms.

Additional advocacy activities and campaigns

Our advocacy continued through the year in briefings with government departments, regular monthly homelessness and housing peaks consultations with Homes NSW, information sessions with the sector, and our regular bi-monthly general meetings of members.

Communicating government messaging back to the sector and communicating the interests and concerns of sector members to government at the federal and state levels has factored largely in our work, particularly in relation to the commissioning of SHS contracts; clarity around continued funding for other programs, especially HYAP; and the review of the Unaccompanied children 12-15 years accessing Specialist Homelessness Services Policy.

Yfoundations will continue to advocate for a better deal for our members and ensure governments and politicians understand and recognise the expertise of the youth specialist homelessness services sector, and that it should be funded accordingly.

Twelve months on from our last annual report, we are still awaiting the release of the National Housing and Homelessness Plan, the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035, and a dedicated NSW child and youth homelessness action plan, for which Yfoundations continued to advocate. While we have been assured Yfoundations will have a key role in the development of the latter, we await

Advocacy and Policy

further developments and a timeframe for the work to commence on this.

Homelessness Australia and Homelessness NSW launched Homelessness Week in August in Sydney with an event at which then-new Federal Minister for Homelessness and Housing, the Hon. Clare O’Neil MP, spoke. National Children’s Commissioner, Anne Hollonds, also presented and raised the issue of unaccompanied child homelessness.

In October, John Macmillan met with the Hon. Rose Jackson, Minister for Housing, Homelessness and Youth where they discussed the content of the position papers outlined above, and the development and resourcing of the forthcoming NSW Homelessness Strategy and Child and Youth Homelessness Action Plan. This was a productive meeting, continuing an important dialogue on the specific needs of children and young people and the importance of our sector. The Minister committed to ongoing discussions with Yfoundations as these important initiatives roll out.

In November, Yfoundations went to Canberra to engage with ministers and advisors to advocate for a standalone national strategy to end child and youth homelessness. We met with Greens MP, Max Chandler-Mather and Shadow Minister for Housing and Homelessness, Michael Sukkar, as well as representatives from Minister O’Neil’s office. These discussions were well received, marking an important step forward in promoting the imperative to ensure the needs of children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness are front and centre in the national policy agenda.

The Australian Government engaged Equity Economics to undertake a Rapid Review into Youth Homelessness to consider potential commonwealth actions within commonwealth areas of responsibility or influence. The review considered actions that could feasibly be delivered quickly by government by targeting or realigning existing investments and programs, as well as longer-term reform options. Yfoundations participated in the Policy Delphi Panel run by Equity Economics in which our CEO, John Macmillan,



strongly advocated for the need for a standalone national child and youth homelessness and housing plan, and investment in youth supported housing models. The findings from this engagement are yet to be released.

Following a meeting we attended with senior staff from Homes NSW and other peak bodies to initiate discussions on the proposed commissioning of specialist homelessness services, we reconvened a working group of our members (formed several months prior) to ensure the government’s policy and processes were informed by the youth homelessness sector. This Commissioning Working Group continues to meet regularly.

We also worked closely with Homelessness NSW and DVNSW to ensure strong sector representation in the recommissioning. Through high-level discussions and collective advocacy, we pushed for a transparent and consistent process that reflected the needs of frontline services and the people they support. In a significant development for the sector, we were pleased to announce that Homes NSW revised the proposed SHS recommissioning plans in response to our joint call.

As a direct outcome of our collective advocacy, Homes NSW assured us that SHS contracts would be directly renegotiated for a period of five years

(from July 2026) with consideration to how some changes may be implemented. We, in collaboration with the other peaks, actively worked with Homes NSW to finalise key messaging and operational details. Unfortunately, part of that messaging confirmed there would be no additional money for the SHS Program. Our joint efforts continue to be focused on securing a stable and effective future for the SHS sector.

Yfoundations also organised and facilitated an information session for the youth homelessness sector on the commissioning of SHS services. Over 90 participants attended the presentation by Homes NSW on 20 May. While the presentation confirmed the benefits of the approach by the department to the commissioning process, it also highlighted the challenges in an environment where there are no additional resources. This will be a major focus of our work over the coming six to 12 months.

Other reports, research activities and articles

Annual Members Survey 2024

We were excited to publish our Annual Membership Survey report, which serves as an important resource, providing valuable insights into the challenges our members face, how they perceive Yfoundations and our work, and what they need from their peak body.

Advocacy and Policy

The survey was distributed on 28 September 2024 via email and promoted through our newsletter and across our social media platforms. It closed on 22 November 2024 and yielded 44 responses.

This year's survey was reworked to provide a better understanding of:

- the demographic reach and diversity of Yfoundations' members and stakeholders, building a profile of survey respondents, including their districts, ages, roles and the organisations they work in
- the lived experience that exists within the sector, and respondents in priority cohorts, particularly those who identify as First Nations or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- the longevity of experience in the sector workforce, wellbeing supports within the sector, career progression, and how the workforce can be better supported.

While this rework limited some comparisons to the previous year's data, we are committed to ensuring we collect data that enables us to better assess how we have progressed over an extended period of time and areas for improvement. The survey reinforced the need for a more detailed sector-wide census of the SHS workforce that demonstrates the demographic reach and diversity of the sector, including workers in priority cohorts.

Given the increased recognition of the importance of lived experience within the community sector generally and the role lived experience plays in informing the work of Yfoundations, we introduced a question asking respondents whether they have lived experience, intentionally leaving the term undefined to allow them to interpret the concept of lived experience based on their own understanding. The data showed that 40.9% of respondents identified as having lived experience while 54.6% did not and 4.6% preferred not to say.

When respondents were asked on a scale of 0-100 to rate their satisfaction with Yfoundations' engagement and consultation over the previous year, 29.4% ranked their level of satisfaction

between 80-89 and 26.5% ranked their level of satisfaction at 90-100, indicating a high level of satisfaction for around 56%, with a further 8.8% providing a rating of between 60-79, indicating a moderate level of satisfaction. At the other end of the scale, 26.5% ranked their satisfaction at below 50, and another 8.8% rated it as between 50-59.

While we are encouraged that a majority of respondents were satisfied with our engagement and consultation, reducing the number of stakeholders who are less satisfied with this aspect of our work is a high priority for Yfoundations.



We were also encouraged that 86% of respondents indicated they had utilised Yfoundations resources over the preceding 12 months, with a rise in regular usage to 38.9%, up from 16.3% in 2023. While the increase in regular usage is encouraging and indicates our resources and information have been useful to our members and stakeholders, the data highlighted opportunities for improved awareness and engagement with our resources, and further enhancement to ensure resources are consistently accessed and highly valued by all stakeholders.

Building on this feedback, we continued to upgrade our website, emphasising and adding practical resources and supports through our dedicated 'Sector Development' and

'Resources' sections, and promoting these through our general members meetings, social media posts and newsletters. The survey report is also available on our website.

We will continue to use the insights in this report as a key source of information to guide our advocacy and support efforts, and improve our reach and impact.

Literature Review 2024-25

Yfoundations developed an extensive literature review and analytical report tracing the history and development of homelessness and the homelessness sector, and tracking policy changes over time. It also explored the political landscape that has played a defining role in shaping the sector and its workforce.

As part of the broader Sector Workforce Development Project, this report will provide the foundation for developing consultation questions that will guide discussions with the sector through various forums, including communities of practice.

While considerable research has rightly focused on the clients supported by SHS, the workforce that underpins these services has often been left out of the discussion. A review of the literature revealed limited research and limited documented best practices on recruiting, retaining and supporting SHS staff with lived experience and those in regional and remote areas.

There is also limited empirical data dedicated to the SHS workforce characteristics in NSW, arguably essential information when planning for sustainability and understanding the needs of this essential workforce.

The duality and interdependence between a supported workforce and successful client outcomes is clear. A sustainable SHS system cannot exist without a sustainable workforce. Understanding who the workforce is, is essential to creating long-term stability in the sector.

The report is being finalised and will be released in the months to come.

Advocacy and Policy

Parity, April 2025

CEO, John Macmillan, wrote an article for the youth homelessness edition of *Parity*, Australia's national homelessness publication. Titled, 'To drive public awareness, we need your support', the article highlighted that while there had been investment by governments into housing and homelessness initiatives, some of which identified young people as a priority cohort, a year down the track we continued to await the release of the National Plan on Housing and Homelessness, and that we did so with the hope and expectation that children and young people get the specialised focus and investment they need and deserve.

The article called for holding governments to account for delivering a whole-of-government systemic response as a core objective in establishing a modern youth homelessness service system, and pointed to our petition to call on all governments to make ending child and youth homelessness a national priority by developing a targeted plan and funding the services needed to achieve this critical objective.

John highlighted the Youth Homelessness Matters Day campaign, intended to build on local collaboration and take a national approach to community engagement and awareness-raising. He also discussed the significant partnership with the Property Industry Foundation and UnLtd for the development of an ongoing national awareness raising campaign.

In the same edition, Lived Experience Coordinator, Simon Byrnes and YHRC member, Jae, collaborated on 'You can't have good mental health without a home', telling Jae's story that shows a safe and stable home for young people is vital for genuine mental wellbeing.

Jae's message was clear: 'To young people: speak up. Don't give up. To decision-makers: open your eyes. Turn on your listening ears. Give us a chance.'

Presentations and conferences

Yfoundations attended AHURI's Australian Homelessness conference

in Adelaide in August 2024, where we actively advocated about and highlighted unaccompanied child and youth homelessness.

In the lead up to Youth Homelessness Matters Day, CEO John Macmillan presented on youth homelessness and our work in this space at two Property Industry Foundation Youth Homelessness Matters breakfasts, one in Sydney and the other in Melbourne. These were important forums to engage with a broader set of stakeholders, particularly in the building and media industries, as well as our valued sector, to put a spotlight on the issue of child and youth homelessness.

Throughout May we had some great opportunities to highlight and advocate for the needs of children and young people experiencing homelessness, to showcase the amazing insights of young people with lived experience, and to continue to advocate for adequate investment in the youth homelessness sector.

The 7th National Housing and Homelessness Forum took place in Sydney in May, where John presented the findings of our working group of members, established to look at the specific housing needs of young people. The presentation, 'Empowering transitions by implementing tailored housing models to end youth homelessness', highlighted the need for more investment in medium-term and transitional supported housing models, engaging with young people in housing design, and implementing trauma-informed support and community integration into program design.

Yfoundations facilitated the Lived Experience Panel Discussion, 'Building homes, not just houses, and ensuring safe, secure and supportive housing for young people'. Comprising current and previous members of our YHRC, the panel provided youth-led insights on housing design and support. They discussed understanding young people's housing needs; what makes a home truly sustainable and how housing providers can adapt to meet those unique needs; and implementing strategies for sustainable tenancies to ensure young people can maintain stable housing.

Yfoundations also presented an interactive workshop exploring the importance of engaging lived experience into policy design and advocacy. Participants learned practical ways to bring lived experience into their policy and advocacy work in a safe, ethical and effective way. The session also covered available resources and how to build lived experience in a way that works for everyone.

Our presentations were well received by delegates from across the country.

Following this event, Yfoundations worked with our partners at the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition to run two workshops at Homelessness Australia's National Homelessness Conference on the Gold Coast on 17-19 June, aimed at continuing the advocacy for better investment in youth housing and support. We made a significant contribution to the conference, co-presenting the two workshops, 'From early intervention to long term housing - what's needed along the way' and 'The Case for Youth Homelessness as a National Priority'.

Our Senior Policy and Communications Officer, Shai Mikus, also participated in two compelling and engaging panels, 'Beyond the Story: Partnering with youth lived expertise to co-create policy and service design' and 'Embedding the Role of Lived Expertise in Practice: A Paradigm Shift in Contemporary Practice'.

The conference agenda included presentations from Minister Clare O'Neil and the Special Envoy for Social Housing and Homelessness, Josh Burns MP. Encouragingly, both acknowledged the importance of recognising the needs of children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. This was a positive development in the context of the Youth Homelessness Matters Every Day campaign call for the Australian and state and territory governments to make ending youth homelessness a national priority. We will continue to liaise with the minister and special envoy on this core objective.

Partnerships, Networks and Committees

In addition to our consultations and communications with our members, Yfoundations continued to meet, advocate, collaborate and share the floor with other organisations and people to ensure children and young people experiencing and at risk of homelessness, and the challenges faced by the services that support them, are included and prioritised in campaigns, events, programs and policy.

With a shared focus on advocating on behalf of our member services and for people across the state experiencing and at risk of homelessness, Yfoundations has continued our collaborative relationships and engagement with our colleagues in the two other NSW homelessness peak bodies.

We work closely with Homelessness NSW and DVNSW in building the knowledge and capacity of the SHS sector, ensuring our advocacy is driven and informed by the sector and by the voices of those experiencing homelessness, with our continued focus being child and youth homelessness, and the youth homelessness services sector.

Yfoundations presents updates at the Homelessness NSW SHS Sector Network Meetings on our work, forward priorities and key issues in child and youth homelessness. Our CEO, John Macmillan and Senior Policy and Communications Officer, Shai Mikus, also participated in Homelessness Capability Framework design sessions run by Nous Group on behalf of Homelessness NSW.

We have continued effective relationships with key government staff in Homes NSW and relevant areas of the broader Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) to ensure child and youth homelessness issues and sector concerns are represented in planning and service delivery processes. This included participation in consultations conducted by DCJ to inform the development of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Strategy and the DCJ Multicultural Plan.

We have maintained effective relationships with key staff in Health NSW, which continues to support our sexual health training platform. We also contributed to the rapid review of

youth homelessness commissioned by the Australian Government.

Yfoundations always welcomes and appreciates opportunities to work collaboratively with partners in the non-government sector, including from within our membership.

At the national level, Yfoundations chaired the Steering Committee for Youth Homelessness Matters Day comprising senior sector representatives from each state and territory, the CEO of Homelessness Australia and key partner organisations.



Yfoundations continued to stand proudly in the partner network of the Raise the Age NSW campaign, focused on raising the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years in NSW. Led by a coalition of First Nations organisations and legal, medical and human rights groups, the campaign is now supported by over 100 organisations in every state and territory calling on their respective governments and the Australian Government to raise the age to at least 14 years.

Home Time.

We also continued to be a coalition supporter of the national Home Time campaign to unlock Australia's housing system for almost 40,000 children and young people with nowhere to live. Home Time is supported by a national coalition of community services, peak

bodies, researchers, unions, young people and community members.

Our partnership with the Property Industry Foundation (the charity of choice for the property and construction industry) and UnLtd (a social purpose organisation connecting the media, marketing and creative industries with charities helping children and young people at risk) is discussed in detail in our report on Youth Homelessness Matters Day and the Young and Alone campaign. Suffice to say, this was a significant relationship that brought in pro bono creative development, assets and marketing that were key to our national awareness campaign on child and youth homelessness.

Yfoundations was proud to collaborate with The Foyer Foundation to present DISRUPT Festival 2025 - a powerful one-night festival showcasing the art, music and stories of young people with lived experience of homelessness. This was an incredible opportunity to witness the transformative power of art, storytelling, youth foyers and youth homelessness services more broadly.

Yfoundations has collaborated and strengthened our work and relationships with many key organisations throughout the year, including:

- ACWA
- Advocate for Children and Young People
- Domestic Violence NSW
- End Street Sleeping Collaboration
- Foyer Foundation
- Homelessness Australia
- Homelessness NSW
- My Foundations Youth Housing
- NCOSS
- Property Industry Foundation
- Queensland Youth Housing Coalition
- Raise the Age Campaign NSW
- Shelter NSW
- Youth Action.

Partnerships, Networks and Committees



Committees

As part of our advocacy on child and youth homelessness and the services that support them, Yfoundations also has representation on the following committees.

Housing and Homelessness Peaks Committee

Yfoundations has continued to actively participate in all meetings of this key committee, which includes all peak bodies representing housing and homelessness service providers in NSW. This committee is a primary mechanism for dialogue between the government (through Homes NSW) and the non-government sector on the priorities to address homelessness in NSW. Yfoundations has strongly advocated for the interests of children and young people experiencing homelessness and the sector that supports them at these meetings, and we continued to keep our members informed of developments through our regular General Meetings and newsletters.

Housing and Mental Health Agreement (HMA) State Steering Committee

With the increased prevalence of children and young people with mental health issues presenting to SHS, Yfoundations' continued our membership of this committee, which provides a formal nexus between mental health and child and youth homelessness support providers.

As a sub-committee of the NSW Mental Health Taskforce, the steering committee was established to ensure effective relationships between mental health and housing service providers, and serves as the state-wide tier of governance for system stewardship, overseeing implementation and resolving issues. Membership includes senior government officials and peak body members, with escalation pathways to the DCJ and NSW Health Secretaries.

NSW Family and Sexual Violence Sector Group

With domestic and family violence and sexual violence being major drivers

of child and youth homelessness, Yfoundations continued to participate in this critical forum to represent and maintain a focus on the needs of children and young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness. Participation in this group helps to ensure essential connections are fostered between intersecting service systems impacting child and youth homelessness.

Family Preservation Sector Stakeholder Forum

Attended by service providers and peak bodies involved with the DCJ Family Preservation program, this forum provides an essential focus on the importance of keeping children safely with their families, a critical element of preventing and intervening early in child and youth homelessness.

Throughcare Steering Committee

Chaired by our partner peak organisation, Youth Action, this committee provides an important opportunity for collaboration between different sectors and service systems focussed on achieving better pathways for young people out of the criminal justice system. Recognising the connection between better pathways and the prevention of youth homelessness, Yfoundations is an active and committed member of this committee.

Forum of Non-Government Agencies (FONGA)

Yfoundations continues to participate in this important forum, chaired by the NSW Council of Social Services, which promotes reform, development and innovation within the community sector and works actively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable people and communities by providing a collective voice to the NSW Government and other key stakeholders.

Our CEO also sits on the boards of End Street Sleeping Collaboration and My Foundations.

Youth Homelessness Matters Day – Young and Alone

Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD) is our national campaign that aims to raise awareness and advocate for solutions to end child and youth homelessness across Australia. Yfoundations plays a pivotal role in organising, promoting and driving the campaign's impact. This year, YHMD took place on Wednesday April 16.

In late 2024, Yfoundations entered a three-year partnership with Property Industry Foundation (PIF) and UnLtd (the media and advertising industry's social purpose organisation) to raise the profile of YHMD and increase public awareness of the plight of the 43,000 unaccompanied children and young people presenting to SHS each year.

With financial assistance from PIF, a new campaign manager position was created to focus on the planning and delivery of YHMD and a pro-bono awareness campaign through UnLtd titled Young and Alone.

Originally the campaign was intended to lead in to YHMD, but with uncertainty around timing of the federal election, which would diminish the capacity of media owners to support the campaign, the decision was made to split the campaign into two parts in 2025 – an activation stage to support YHMD and an awareness stage utilising the pro-bono advertising. The expanded focus beyond one day of the year led to the campaign being titled Youth Homelessness Matters Every Day.

Yfoundations continued to highlight the critical need for a dedicated approach to address the unique needs of children and young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. We continued our call for federal, state and territory governments to formulate dedicated youth focused homelessness plans with adequate funding to deliver the solutions. This messaging underpinned our YHMD and Young and Alone activities.

The focus this year has been on asset creation to support members and the sector in the delivery and growth of YHMD and for the awareness campaign, which will run for another two years. Learnings from the delivery of the campaigns for 2025 will inform the approach for 2026.



Youth Homelessness Matters Day

Preparation and communication to support YHMD 2025 started earlier than in previous years. This gave the sector extra lead time to plan events.

For the first time, members and the broader sector were given the opportunity to sign up to accept donations via the Yfoundations website, with 95% of the money donated going to the designated organisations. Sign-up to accept donations was taken up by 42% of members. While this is a solid response, we are aiming for increased sign-ups for 2026.

With the aid of the YHMD steering committee, nine interstate youth homelessness organisations also signed on. Increasing participation across Australia will be prioritised for 2026.

We are incredibly grateful to the YHMD Steering Committee, comprising sector representatives from each state and territory, and other partners, for donating their expertise and time to support us and for making the campaign a truly national one. The



committee helped shape the direction of YHMD and Young and Alone, and made it possible for us to advocate to ministers both federal and in all states and territories.

PIF continued its support of YHMD by hosting Youth Homelessness Matters forums in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. They were well attended by the public, Yfoundations members, the media industry and PIF members. These forums highlighted the importance of the day through stories of lived experience, showcased the important work PIF does supporting the sector, and teased the Young and Alone campaign.

Twenty-four YHMD events were registered with Yfoundations and promoted through our website and social media accounts. There was a 40% increase from the previous year in registered YHMD events, with many unregistered events also occurring across the nation and in Canada, USA and Ghana. Forums, podcasts, art displays, fun days, stalls, youth festivals, giant monopoly, flash mobs, site visits, couch races, afternoon teas, webinars, walks, skate days and storytelling

Youth Homelessness Matters Day – Young and Alone

sessions were all part of the mix. Yfoundations staff visited several local events on the day.

Yfoundations hosted The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC (NSW's Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, and Minister for Youth) for a visit to Caretakers Cottage where she toured the facility, met with YHRC member Jennifer Zerafa, frontline workers and the Yfoundations team. It was rewarding to facilitate the minister's first-hand experience of a youth SHS facility and learn what young people, like Jennifer, can achieve with the wrap around support of services like Caretakers Cottage.

Asset creation was a primary focus for 2025. More assets were created for organisations to support their YHMD activity than ever before. An updated campaign kit and fact sheet were available along with more promotional posters, the fundraising portal, and additional material to support organisations, including two suites of social media tiles with a communications plan.

Our own social media activity using these assets increased dramatically in the lead up to YHMD. A new YHMD Instagram account was created and a broad, ongoing campaign highlighting the facts around youth homelessness was rolled out across YHMD and Yfoundations accounts. We also promoted registered events through our social media accounts. Regular posts saw a huge increase in engagement with our accounts in the lead up to YHMD. Yfoundations accounts had a 229% increase in reach on Instagram and 188% increase on Facebook. YHMD accounts had a dramatic 3,200% increase in reach on Facebook and a solid first-year reach to 8,200 people on Instagram.

For the first time this year, we received support from social media influencers. A special thanks to Nat's What I Reckon and to Christian Tull for creating posts and posting wearing YHMD shirts. Nat had 5,500 reactions on Facebook and 65,000 views and 6,000 Likes on YouTube, while Christian had 1,100 reactions on Facebook and 550 likes on Instagram.



Young and Alone

Yfoundations is incredibly grateful to a long list of organisations and individuals who brought the Young and Alone campaign to life.

The partnership with UnLtd and Property Industry Foundation (PIF) has been fundamental to this campaign. PIF connected UnLtd with Yfoundations and generously donated funds to support the campaign. UnLtd engaged two prominent powerhouse agencies - Ogilvy and PHD - to create and implement Young and Alone. A huge thank you to Penny Kaleta from PIF and Jade Harley from UnLtd for their passion and advice.

The campaign was conceptualised and developed by the Ogilvy team who were incredibly generous with their time, ideas and strategic direction. They created countless creative assets and, for the first time with an UnLtd campaign, brought the invaluable services of their amazing PR team on board. Ogilvy was also instrumental in connecting us with Rabbit, our production company who refined the creative idea and brought it to life in a sensitive and respectful way.

Special thanks to Hogarth, Rabbit, Otis Studios, White Chocolate, and The Editors for their incredible production. PHD was an absolute powerhouse in briefing media companies and securing \$3 million worth of media for the campaign - an astounding task. They planned and booked the campaign, rescheduled it twice (as the timing was pushed back) and found time to raise money for YHMD. We are eternally grateful to all of you for your time and contribution to making Young and Alone a reality.

Without the generosity and support of the media sector, there would be no campaign. The value of the donated media was overwhelming. The campaign ran across TV, broadcast video on demand, out-of-home advertising, social media, radio, PR and through influencer activity.

We thank the following media owners for supporting the campaign with donated media: Alliance Outdoor Media Group, Amazon Prime, ARN, Australian Traffic Network, Broadsheet, Cartology, Foxtel Media, JCDecaux, JOLT, Nine, OA Collective, oOh!media, Paramount, QMS,

Youth Homelessness Matters Day – Young and Alone



Southern Cross Austereo, Seven, Snapchat, TikTok, Time Out, Torch Media, Uber, Urban List, Val Morgan, Vinyl Media and Yahoo.

Yfoundations would also like to thank the sector for its support and understanding around the ongoing changes to the timing of the Young and Alone pro-bono awareness campaign. Having the support of the sector in NSW and across Australia has been critical to the implementation and success of the campaign.

Many concepts were presented to Yfoundations in the early stages of the campaign but nothing truly resonated until we heard the idea for Young and Alone. It was simple, powerful and had the potential to be emotive and heart wrenching, which was what we wanted the public to feel. Once the idea had been settled on, it was critically important for Yfoundations to go through a consultation process with the YHRC to ensure the campaign was based on their stories of lived experience.

The YHRC had a massive impact on the approach to the campaign and Yfoundations is extremely grateful for their openness, honesty and generosity with their stories. YHRC members were at early briefing sessions with the creative agency, and the media briefing, and have been involved throughout many stages of the process.

As the premise of the campaign was faux reality television, we felt it was necessary for the depiction of young people in the

campaign to be based on reality while maintaining respect and compassion for their circumstances. The YHRC workshoped the story lines, assisted with preliminary scripts, advised on costuming, and briefed the actors and production crew so they had a more realistic idea of what they were depicting.

We were incredibly fortunate to be able to take advantage of the incredible team at Ogilvy PR. Public relations hasn't been included in a campaign like this before but it was an incredibly powerful way to kick start Young and Alone.

As the campaign rolled out with a week of PR activity, members of the YHRC were incredibly generous with their time and stories. Their participation put faces to the crisis of child and youth homelessness, which was very powerful. We cannot thank Ogilvy PR and our participating YHRC members enough for their input.

The campaign launched on 18 June and, from an earned media perspective, Ogilvy PR secured 237 pieces (47 unique) of coverage with a total estimated reach of around 21.4 million plus influencer coverage by the end of its first week.

With asset creation a major focus, hundreds of pieces of creative were distributed to media outlets, including a range of social media assets and signatures to support members' child and youth homelessness awareness campaign activity.

YHMD Advisory Committee members (to June 2025)

Michelle Ackerman, Head of Youth Support Services, Youth Off The Streets (NSW)

Nerida Ackerman, President, Yfoundations

Katie Berry, Advocacy and Engagement Manager, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

Kate Colvin, CEO, Homelessness Australia

Lorraine Dupree, Executive Director, Queensland Youth Housing Coalition

Jason Juretic, CEO, Stepping Stone House (NSW)

Penny Kaleta, NSW State Manager, Property Industry Foundation

Cheryl Lierton, Executive Manager, Uniting Communities (SA)

John Macmillan, CEO, Yfoundations

Melanie Martin, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Brisbane Youth Service (QLD)

Shorna Moore, Head of Policy, Advocacy & Government Relations, Melbourne City Mission (VIC)

Dr Catherine Robinson, University of Tasmania (TAS)

Antonella Segre, CEO, Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

Thomas Stevens, Director – Sector Development, Workforce Capability & Communications, Youth Coalition of the ACT

Keith Waters, Head of Innovation & Advocacy, Kids Under Cover (VIC)

Hannah Watts, CEO, Youth Coalition of the ACT

Jemma Wood, Director, Youth & Family Services, Anglicare NT

Sam Woods, Campaign Manager YHMD, Yfoundations

Sector Workforce Development Project

Yfoundations was funded by Homes NSW under the Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) Sector Partnership (formerly the Industry Partnership), in collaboration with DVNSW and Homelessness NSW. The partnership recognises that successful outcomes for clients are directly linked to the health and sustainability of the workforce that supports them.

Homes NSW identified five key priority areas to guide this work:

- Supporting the sector: looking at challenges around recruitment, retention and career progression for a diverse workforce, particularly Aboriginal staff, staff with lived experience, workers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and those based in regional and remote areas.
- Leadership and education: strengthening sector capability through collaborative leadership and workforce development.
- Cultural safety and appropriateness: ensuring culturally safe and responsive service delivery, particularly for Aboriginal and CALD communities.
- Workplace health, safety and wellbeing: supporting staff wellbeing and psychosocial safety in high-pressure environments.
- Recommissioning preparation: assisting SHS services to prepare for the 2026 recommissioning process.

Literature Review and Analytical Report

Yfoundations developed an extensive literature review and analytical report exploring the origin of the homelessness sector and tracking policy changes over time. The review also looked at two often-overlooked cohorts: workers with lived experience and those in regional, rural and remote settings. This work aimed to uncover best practices and gaps in the evidence base, to guide sector-wide improvements.

These findings shaped the design of two pilot communities of practice (CoPs), allowing practitioners to test emerging ideas and reflect on their own experiences in structured peer settings.



Image courtesy of @selfcaredare

Communities of Practice

Two CoPs were developed in direct response to the literature review findings:

'Putting Your Oxygen Mask on First'

Designed for staff with lived experience, this CoP provided a safe, trauma-informed space for reflection on role identity, support needs and the impact of lived experience on service delivery.

This CoP supported workers with lived experience to explore how their histories are recognised, or overlooked, in professional spaces. Participants

discussed whether lived experience should be formally defined and how it intersects with professional identity.

Key insights:

- Lived experience is valuable but shouldn't become a constrained or tokenised identity.
- There's a difference between lived experience and lived expertise but this is a spectrum.
- Support structures are lacking: practitioners want clinical supervision, disclosure guidance and better pathways for influence beyond advisory roles.


Sector Workforce Development Project

WHY COUNTRY AREAS ARE DIFFERENT

Is youth homelessness in the country any different from youth homelessness in the city? Yes and no.

For instance, accommodation options are usually much fewer in a country town, maybe no emergency accommodation at all, and very little for the medium and longer terms. As a result of this, a young person could "burn bridges" very quickly, leaving no choice but to leave town. Or a person might remain in an unsafe situation because a better alternative can't be found.

Isolation is a significant factor in the country affecting the range of services accessible to people. It is unlikely that a young homeless person in the country will have easy access to the range of speciality counselling services (eg, drug and alcohol, sexual abuse, adolescent psychology, family reconciliation, etc). Even a few kilometres can make a service inaccessible if there is no public transport.



A violent, abusive or discriminatory situation may mean a person will need to leave a country town, thus separating him/herself from support networks. This is different to a large city where a person can remove him/herself from an abusive situation and still have his/her established supports accessible.

In the country the stigma of being homeless or otherwise disadvantaged is hard to shake (without leaving town) whereas in the city one's past is less visible.

Community attitudes to homelessness in country towns are often different. For example, the belief "homelessness is not a problem in our town" may coexist with a significant youth homelessness problem.

For workers, ensuring confidentiality is a challenge in a small community. Also, large distances to travel can affect access to training and professional networking opportunities. On the other hand, in a medium to large rural community networking can be quite successful as it's relatively easy to get to know the other workers in the town.

— Rick Harrison
Co-ordinator, Goulburn Accommodation Program
Shepparton, Vic.

Image: Parity, Issue 6 Vol 8 July 1995



Image: Leading Edge Teams

'Tyranny of Distance'

Created for staff working in regional, rural and remote areas to explore geographic and systemic barriers to effective service delivery, the regional CoP explored the day-to-day realities of isolated service delivery, including recruitment challenges, burnout risks and policy misalignment. Participants called for more adaptable, place-based approaches and highlighted the need for system change.

Key insights:

- Better definitions of sustainable service delivery in regional/remote contexts (place-based).
- Increased access to technology, remote supervision and interagency coordination.
- Clearer workforce support mechanisms that recognise regional complexity, not penalise it.
- Transportation is a massive issue for staff and clients.
- No housing for staff or clients.

These CoPs will remain active and future sessions are being informed by the feedback we received from participants, such as:

- preference for bi-monthly or quarterly sessions
- emphasis on:

- barriers, boundaries and self-care for staff
- communication styles and building rapport
- professional development, brainstorming for aspirational systemic changes
- looking at the similarities between services and how they deal with similar challenges
- trends within homelessness
- lived experience across the sector
- preferred structure:
 - guest speakers or presentations
 - open discussion and sharing
 - practical skill sessions or workshops
 - working on defined projects/ outputs over a period of time.

Specific feedback from participants included:

'It was great to collaborate with other workers and validate what is being seen and felt in the sector.'

'I found the CoP very helpful and supportive, as well as informative. It is great to hear from other services and the issues that they face and solutions they may have.'

'Need more participants. Having representatives from each service.'

Yfoundations is evaluating how to

take this feedback on to ensure these spaces are beneficial to the workforce. Yfoundations is also scoping new CoPs for Aboriginal and CALD workers based on sector feedback.

To complement the literature review and CoPs, Yfoundations is conducting targeted regional visits in July and August 2025. These site visits will give services an opportunity to articulate their specific workforce challenges, many of which are not adequately captured in metro-based data or policy frameworks.

The Sector Workforce Development Project has laid the foundation for deeper workforce reforms, and our role in the SHS Sector Partnership will focus on ensuring those reforms are grounded in the voices of those who do the work.

A sustainable SHS workforce can't be built on short-term contracts, symbolic inclusion or metro-centric frameworks. It must start with listening to and collaborating with the people at the coalface.

Yfoundations has secured funding under this project for two more years and is developing project plans for sector workforce development work over this time.

Youth Justice SHS Capacity Building Project

The Youth Justice SHS Capacity Building Project, which commenced in 2023 with funding from Youth Justice NSW, aimed to address a critical gap in resources for professionals working with young people who use violence in the home, often referred to as AVITH (Adolescent Violence in the Home).

This project concluded in June 2025 with the completion of a comprehensive, self-paced interactive online learning platform titled, 'Working with children and young people who use violence', designed to equip frontline practitioners with the knowledge and tools to support these young people more effectively.

Project context and need

Young people who use violence in the home frequently come from backgrounds of significant trauma and hardship. However, the systems designed to support them, such as legal and social services, often categorise individuals as either victims or perpetrators, overlooking the complexity of their experiences. This dichotomy can result in young people losing access to vital resources like crisis housing or foster care, exacerbating their vulnerabilities.

This project sought to shift the narrative by equipping practitioners with a more nuanced understanding of the behaviours behind AVITH and providing practical strategies for supporting these young people. By fostering trauma-informed, culturally responsive and relationship-based approaches, we aimed to reduce the negative impact of harmful labelling and support young people in navigating complex life circumstances.

Online learning platform

Scheduled for launch on 1 July 2025, the online learning platform serves as the culmination of this project. The self-paced course is designed to take approximately six to seven hours to complete and is accessible to a broad audience of frontline workers, including those in the fields of youth justice, child protection, housing and community services.

This platform is intended to be dynamic and will continue to evolve, with new

content, case studies and resources being added as they become available. It is structured to allow for flexible learning and can be revisited for ongoing professional development.

Course content and features

The course includes the following key components:

- Project overview and research on AVITH
 - Empirical data, with permission from Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), to provide a solid foundation for understanding AVITH.
 - Access to relevant legislation, including the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW), and links to policy frameworks.
- Stories from the frontline
 - Contributions from two frontline workers at Bail Accommodation Support Service and a Taldumande Youth Services case manager with lived experience.
 - A digital story from Jeffrey Amatto, a proud Wiradjuri man and founder of More Cultural Rehabs, Less Jails, who shares his personal journey and insights into supporting young Aboriginal men. His work highlights the power of community-based healing groups. *'When we're locked away, that's when our mental health starts going ape on us and it starts causing trauma to the trauma. I see stuff in the jail system that'll make a glass eye cry. I seen men come in there [for] as little as a traffic fine and walk out an addict. I seen men come in there and line up ten and twenty deep to use that one syringe.'* - Jeffrey Amatto
- Training modules
 - Ken McMasters (11 modules): A seasoned expert with over 40 years of experience, Ken provides

training on engaging young people, overcoming bias, being mindful of language, and effective communication practices.

- Shayne Hood (four modules): Founder of Wounds and Wisdom, Shayne offers practical training on breaking harmful cycles, coaching techniques, reflective practices, and utilising lived experience in youth justice work.
- Resource hub
 - A collection of tools, templates, practice guides and updated resources to support practitioners in their daily work.

Platform features

The learning platform includes several key features to ensure engagement and effectiveness:

- Pre- and post-training surveys embedded to assess learning outcomes and knowledge acquisition.
- A discussion forum, actively monitored by administrators, enabling practitioners to connect, share experiences and learn from one another.
- Real-time feedback forms, enabling users to provide feedback on the course content and suggest improvements.
- The platform also allows users to share their own practitioner stories and tips for working with young people who use violence, creating a valuable peer-learning space.

This project is a significant step forward in equipping practitioners with the tools, knowledge and confidence to work more effectively with young people who use violence in the home.

By fostering a deeper understanding of the trauma that drives such behaviours and emphasising relationship-based approaches, we are helping to break the cycles of violence that impact young people and their families.

Good Practice Guidelines

Development of the Good Practice Guidelines continued throughout 2024–25, with the working group being re-ignited to revise the draft modules that were written over the course of the year.



Following a series of sector workshops held over the course of the year, we are excited to be on track to deliver this sector-led initiative to define and support quality practice across youth specialist homelessness services and youth supported housing providers.

The guidelines continue to be shaped by a collaborative working group of eight metro and regional services:

- Coast Shelter - Central Coast
- Oasis/Salvation Army - Inner City Sydney
- Social Futures - Statewide
- Southern Youth and Family Services - Illawarra Shoalhaven and Southern NSW
- St Laurence House - Eastern Sydney
- Stepping Stone House - Sydney
- Uniting - Statewide
- YP Space - Mid North Coast.

Scope and structure

Designed as a series of practical, user-friendly modules that follow the journey of working with young people from intake through to exit, the modules include:

- Good Practice principles
- Building relationships
- Supporting young people to build confidence and independence
- Early intervention
- Intake
- Support planning and management
- Housing options
- Supporting young people managing complex needs.

Practice-first, flexible delivery

Informed by feedback from the sector, we are developing the guidelines to be digitally accessible, interactive and responsive to frontline realities - not just best-case scenarios.

The content will be delivered through a mix of:

- interactive online modules
- model tools and templates
- printable versions for offline reference.

Project progress

In 2025, we conducted workshops with youth homelessness service providers to develop the core modules of the guidelines. The working group is now meeting on a monthly basis to review the module content and guide the development of the practical supports and interactive tools that will support implementation.

What's next

The modules of the Good Practice Guidelines and the practical supports required to support implementation will be incrementally released over the coming year. To ensure the guidelines remain responsive to emerging needs, the working group will guide the ongoing development of new modules focused on working with Aboriginal young people and young people from diverse backgrounds.

This foundational work will enable services to better onboard new staff, embed consistent practice and strengthen outcomes for young people experiencing homelessness.

Health Training

In 2024–2025, Yfoundations continued to support frontline workers and carers supporting young people across NSW to feel more confident and better equipped to have conversations about sexual health with young people.



Our Sticky Stuff and Because You Care programs remained accessible through our online learning platform, offering engaging, self-paced training for both professionals and carers. This work is supported through funding for the online delivery platform from the NSW Ministry of Health's STI Programs Unit.

Yfoundations appreciates this ongoing partnership, which enables the provision of freely-available high-quality online sexual health education training modules across the sector.

During the year, around 170 individuals registered for one or both of our online sexual health programs,

and 79% of those completed all modules. Evaluation responses indicate increased confidence among participants in supporting young people's sexual health needs and having safe, informed conversations.

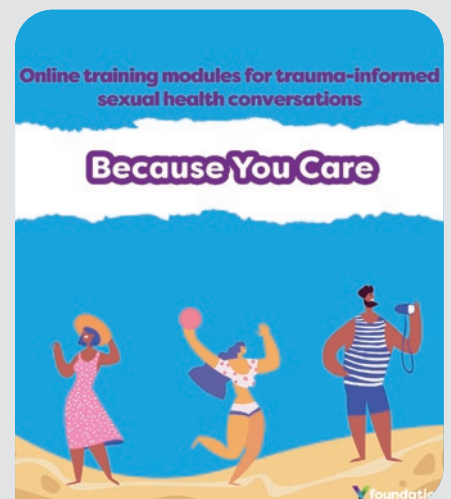
With the cessation of funding for our face-to-face training and the departure last year of Megan Hall, our Health Promotion and Training Coordinator, our capacity to deliver face-to-face onsite sexual health training was reduced. However, a special highlight was welcoming back Megan for an online webinar training session in June and to help train Yfoundations staff for

the future delivery of the training.

The feedback on this session was glowing: *'Our team and youth volunteers found the training provided by Megan helpful and informative.'*

We thank Megan for her time and generosity in returning for this facilitated session.

We have commenced revising the training modules and are focusing on growing the face-to-face component of this sexual health education training as well as expanding the uptake of our online training over the coming 12 months.



Communications and Media

Yfoundations strengthened our communications throughout the year to drive systemic change and policy reform, inform the sector and the public of key issues and developments in the child and youth homelessness space, and amplify the voices of young people with lived experience of homelessness.

Through timely media releases, monthly newsletters, consistent social media engagement and regular General Member Meetings, we kept our members, stakeholders and the broader public informed and connected. Our communications supported our policy and advocacy work by spotlighting sector developments, mobilising support for reform and elevating lived experience.

Our media releases and social media posts throughout 2024–25 highlighted key data, policy gaps and public opinion on child and youth homelessness, reinforcing our advocacy priorities and calls for systemic reform:

- Media release, 'Federal Budget Response - Another missed opportunity to address child and youth homelessness' (28 March 2025) and accompanying social media content highlighting the absence of targeted investment in youth homelessness.
- Media releases, 'Do you know the reality of Australia's youth homelessness crisis?' (28 March 2025) and 'The reality is Australia is experiencing a youth homelessness

crisis' (10 April 2025), shared in the lead-up to Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD) 2025, raising public awareness and building momentum for the Young and Alone campaign.

- Media release, 'NSW Budget not responding to youth homelessness across the state' (24 June 2025), calling on the NSW Government to deliver a dedicated plan for children and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Social Media

Yfoundations' social media presence in 2024–25 played a key role in amplifying our advocacy, driving engagement with our campaigns and policy work, and elevating young people's voices.

Over the year, we promoted initiatives such as the landmark Young and Alone campaign, Youth Homelessness Matters Day, and the Raise the Age campaign, alongside sharing media releases, calls for donations and promoting key events, including our Homelessness Week Drop-in attended by members of the Youth Homelessness Representative Council

at NSW Parliament and our Youth Justice Project.



We utilised our platforms - Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn - to invite sector participation in consultations, such as the Homes NSW 10-year Homes for NSW Plan, and to promote our submissions to the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025–2035 and the Federal Budget.

Through consistent, targeted content, we built momentum around our advocacy priorities and created accessible entry points for public, partner and policymaker engagement.

Key highlights included:

- partnering with charity organisations for Youth Homelessness Matters Day and promoting affiliated events, campaign assets and sector-wide engagement activities
- launching and promoting the Young and Alone campaign to raise national awareness of youth homelessness
- promoting media releases and opinion pieces that highlighted systemic gaps and advocated for reform
- announcing the launch of the Youth Justice Project, aimed at

Key Statistics



Reach
4,299 (📈 70.3% from last year)

Content Interactions
591 (📈 380.5% from last year)

Link Clicks
53 (📈 211.8% from last year)

Visits
1,447 (📈 34.4% from last year)

Follows
115 (📈 98.3% from last year)

Reach
2,538 (📈 170.9% from last year)

Content Interactions
881 (📈 100% from last year)

Visits
892 (📈 97.8% from last year)

Follows
144




No comparison data available

Impressions 34,267

Reactions 1,334

Comments 25

Reposts 36

Page views 850

Unique visitors 466

Followers 2033

Communications and Media



activities, as well as key news from across the youth homelessness sector. We did this through our monthly newsletter, our bi-monthly general member meetings and our annual general meeting.

Our general member meetings provide a key space for collaboration. This time offers members the opportunity to hear about current advocacy and policy priorities, share feedback and stay engaged with sector developments. These meetings also help shape the content of our communications, ensuring our updates remain grounded in the realities and concerns of the youth homelessness sector.

In addition to our regular general member meetings and sector updates, Yfoundations hosted a dedicated online session with Homes NSW on 20 May 2025, focusing on the recommissioning of specialist homelessness services. Renée Wirth, Executive Director of Housing Strategy & Policy, and Humair Ahmad, Executive Director of Housing Programs & Partnerships, presented to members on the commissioning process, addressed sector concerns and responded to questions raised through our ongoing advocacy. This session provided an opportunity for members to gain early insight into contract changes and engage directly with Homes NSW leadership.

better supporting young people using violence and involved in or at risk of involvement in the youth justice system

- sharing sector-wide invitations to the online SHS Network Meetings
- encouraging public support through calls for donations and petition sign-ups
- promoting participation in DISRUPT, a youth-led lived experience conference showcasing young people's voices and solutions
- supporting the Home Time Campaign and amplifying national sector calls for housing solutions for 16-24-year-olds
- promoting Yfoundations' policy submissions to the NSW Homelessness Strategy and the Federal Pre-Budget Submission
- publishing the CEO's response to

the Productivity Commission's 2025 Report on Government Services

- advocating alongside partners in the Raise the Age campaign
- supporting engagement in the Homes NSW Plan consultation process through targeted posts
- sharing the YHRC's position paper, 'What is a Home', co-authored by young people with lived experience
- highlighting the success of our Youth Homelessness Drop-in at NSW Parliament during Homelessness Week.

Member and Sector Communications

In 2024-2025, Yfoundations continued to keep our members and supporters connected, informed and engaged, with updates on our work and



YHMD2025

Reach

16,035 (📈 139.7% from last year)

Content Interactions

843 (📈 423.6% from last year)

Link Clicks

151 (📈 403.3% from last year)

Visits

2,880 (📉 21.6% from last year)

Follows

175 (📉 31.6% from last year)



YHMD2025

No comparison data.
Account created in March 2025

Reach

8,526

Content Interactions

550

Link clicks

106

Visits

381

Follows

112



Yfoundations

creating a future without youth homelessness

Newsletter Statistics
(Year-on-Year)

Subscribers:

1,086 (📈 65.8% from last year)

Average Open Rate:

37.4%

Unsubscribe Rate:

0.25%

Media Coverage

SBS World News 8 August 2024	'New report highlights impacts of housing children in alternative care arrangements' Jordan 'Jae' Valencia, YHRC member and Trish Connolly, former Yfoundations CEO, interviewed
AdNews Online & Mumbrella 27 November 2024	'PHD Australia raises \$6,000 to fight youth homelessness' Sam Woods, Yfoundations Campaign Manager, named
Mi3 27 November 2024	'PHD Sydney raises over \$6,000 to combat youth homelessness' Sam Woods named
MirageNews.com 28 March 2025	'Budget Response Fails on Child, Youth Homelessness' John Macmillan quoted
AdNews Online 7 April 2025	'Media industry backs Youth Homelessness Matters Day'
Property Australia 16 April 2025	'Industry comes together for Youth Homelessness Matters Day' John Macmillan quoted
Cathnews.com 17 April 2025	'Marist180 calls for immediate action to end youth homelessness'
Newswire 22 June 2025	News.com.au, Perthnow.com.au, HeraldSun.com.au "'Human Tragedy": Half of homeless Aussie youth asking for help get turned away' John Macmillan and Natasha Ransford, YHRC member, interviewed
Yahoo News 22 June 2025	"'Million-to-one" chance changed teen's life' John Macmillan and Natasha Ransford interviewed
AdNews Online 23 June 2025	'Yfoundations tackles youth homelessness via UnLtd, Ogilvy and PHD' John Macmillan quoted
Campaignbrief.com 23 June 2025	'Yfoundations reframes survival TV to expose youth homelessness reality in new campaign "Young and Alone" via Ogilvy, PHD and UnLtd' John Macmillan quoted
Timeout 23 June 2025	'Youth homelessness is the silent threat to Sydney's future - here's how you can help' John Macmillan interviewed

Media Coverage

Canberra Times 23 June 2025	"Sleeping on trains, in tents and cars": youth homelessness at crisis level' John Macmillan and Natasha Ransford interviewed
Little Black Book Online 23 June 2025	'Ogilvy, PhD, and Unltd Unveil Hard-Hitting Youth Homelessness Campaign'
Bandt.com.au 23 June 2025 24 June 2025	'Fake Reality Show Highlights the Reality of Youth Homelessness' John Macmillan quoted 'OTIS Teams Up with YFoundations and Hogarth & Ogilvy to Convey Distressing "Young & Alone" Campaign'
Institute of Community Directors 23 June 2025	'Faux drama series brings home the reality of youth homelessness'
Branding in Asia 24 June 2025	"'Young and Alone" Campaign Spotlights the Youth Homelessness Crisis in Australia'
MirageNews.com 24 June 2025	'NSW Budget Fails to Address Youth Homelessness' John Macmillan quoted
7News at Noon TV and Online Aired 26 June 2025	'Youth Homelessness Crisis' Shai Mikus, Senior Policy and Communications Officer interviewed
Pedestrian.TV 27 June 2025	"'Just Trying to Survive": Inside Australia's Youth Homelessness Crisis' YHRC members Jennifer Zerafa and Marija Rathouski interviewed, and John Macmillan quoted
9News TV and Online Aired 28 June 2025	'Alarms are being raised over the increase of youth homelessness' John Macmillan and Natasha Ransford interviewed
Out in Perth 11 July 2025	'At 20, Ari found himself one of man Australian youth experiencing homelessness' Ari Kallistos interviewed

Our Team



John Macmillan
Chief Executive Officer



Anna Schinella
*Head of Policy and
Advocacy*



Shai Mikus
*Senior Policy and
Communications
Officer*



Adelaide Falzon
*Industry and Workforce
Development Officer*



Sam Woods
*Campaign Manager -
Youth Homelessness
Matter Day*



Simon Byrnes
*Lived Experience
Coordinator*



Nicole Booth
Office Manager

We said goodbye to the following staff members:

Trish Connolly
Chief Executive Officer

Jessie Adlide
*Research and Policy
Assistant*

Nicola O'Hanlon
*Youth Justice Project
Officer*

Thank you for your service and commitment to supporting vulnerable children and young people in NSW.

Our Board



Nerida Ackerman
President



Eleonore Johansson
Treasurer
Illawarra Representative
Southern Youth and Family
Services



Alan Brennan
Secretary
Hunter New England
Representative
Pathfinders



Michelle Ackerman
Metropolitan Representative
Youth Off The Streets



Richard Ayoub
Nepean Blue Mountains
Representative



Lisa Graham
Northern Sydney
Representative
Taldumande Youth Services



Laurie Matthews
South Eastern Sydney
Representative
Caretakers Cottage



Jody Pearce
Western NSW
Representative
Veritas House



Meena Johnson
Northern NSW
Representative
Wesley Mission



Vivian Stavis
Metropolitan Representative
Lillian Howell Project

Thank you for your service and commitment to supporting vulnerable children and young people in NSW.

Financial Overview

Treasurer's Report

Dear Members,

Once again, I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for the financial year 2024–2025.

Overall, the financial position and reserves of Yfoundations are healthy and all legal accruals and entitlements have been provided for.

Our funding from DCJ for the State Peaks Program has just been confirmed for the next three years, which means Yfoundations has secured funding up to June 2028, with a two-year extension after that, to enable us to continue our research and policy focus and output.

The funding we secured last year under the SHS Industry and Workforce Development Program has also been renewed for a further two years. We are pleased to be able to continue the hard work Yfoundations has done in getting this program off the ground for the youth SHS sector and to build on and initiate a range of sector development activities to be delivered throughout 2025–27.

This time last year, I reported that the NSW Health funding for our Sticky Stuff Training had ceased. While this has not changed, I am happy to report that the department has continued financial support for the LMS platform we use for the delivery of the online training, for which we are grateful. Yfoundations will be building on the work started in the second half of this year to explore the viability of bringing back our popular face-to-face Sticky Stuff Training for frontline providers.

At 30 June 2025, we are at the cusp of launching the Youth Justice SHS Capacity Building Project, which will signal the completion of our commitment for the grant funding carried over from the previous financial year for this project. We look forward to seeing the sector response to and uptake of this valuable resource in the coming year.

Thanks again to our member services for their continued membership. And a very special thank you to the members that support Yfoundations by allowing the time for their staff to participate on the Yfoundations Board and the various working groups and communities of practice the team has established during the year.

I once again also thank our external advisers who continued to provide another year of valued specialist financial support: our auditors Stewart Brown Chartered Accountants, and Purpose Accounting.

We are fortunate that our board comprises skilled and knowledgeable organisational leaders and managers who bring years of invaluable experience to Yfoundations, ensuring good governance, financial management and informed direction.

I also appreciate the value our experienced and committed staff team, led by our new CEO John Macmillan, brings to Yfoundations and to the sector as a whole. Thank you, John, for the hard work you have done in taking on the leadership of this organisation and for your firm commitment to the invaluable work of Yfoundations.



Eleonore Johansson

Treasurer
Yfoundations



Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2025

Yfoundations ABN 20 512 756 029

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,311,455	1,324,915
Trade and other receivables	38,885	36,692
<i>Total current assets</i>	<u>1,350,340</u>	<u>1,361,607</u>
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	30,364	14,401
Right-of-use assets	114,307	60,728
<i>Total non-current assets</i>	<u>144,671</u>	<u>75,129</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1,495,011</u>	<u>1,436,736</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	125,454	210,967
Provisions	20,513	20,602
Lease Liabilities	60,387	63,180
<i>Total current liabilities</i>	<u>206,354</u>	<u>294,749</u>
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	15,616	16,953
Lease Liabilities	53,920	-
<i>Total non-current liabilities</i>	<u>69,536</u>	<u>16,953</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>275,890</u>	<u>311,702</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>1,219,121</u>	<u>1,125,034</u>
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS	<u>1,219,121</u>	<u>1,125,034</u>

Audited Accounts

The abridged Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Profit or Loss and other Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the full notes on accounts attached to the comprehensive Audited Accounts.

The company's external auditor, Stewart Brown Chartered Accountants, gave the accounts for the year an unqualified audit report.

Board members certify that funding has been expended in accordance with the conditions of funding agreements and guidelines.

A full set of audited accounts can be obtained on request to:

The Secretary

Yfoundations
PO Box 3115
Eora Nation
Redfern NSW 2016

Statement of Profit or Loss and other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Revenue	1,310,576	1,097,361
Other Income	9,102	-
<i>Total income</i>	<u>1,319,678</u>	<u>1,097,361</u>
Expenses		
Administration and other expenses	(11,195)	(6,285)
Conferences, events and workshops	(25,494)	(19,650)
Depreciation	(73,937)	(72,463)
Finance costs: lease liability	(1,226)	(3,528)
Occupancy	(10,741)	(8,132)
Office expenses	(42,657)	(45,063)
Professional fees and insurances	(139,226)	(91,736)
Project expenses	(112,369)	(187,544)
Salaries and employee benefits	(730,000)	(521,146)
Telecommunication	(48,986)	(49,533)
Travel	(29,760)	(43,328)
<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>(1,225,591)</u>	<u>(1,048,408)</u>
Surplus for the year	<u>94,087</u>	<u>48,953</u>

Thank you

A sincere thanks to all our members and funders

Blue Sky Community Services

Burdekin

CareSouth

Caretakers Cottage

CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay

CatholicCare Wilcannia-Forbes

Coast Shelter

Community Restorative Centre (CRC)

Detour House / The Girl's Refuge

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW)

Eleonore Johansson

Fabian Webber

Jewish House

Kellie Checkley

Kids Under Cover

Launchpad Youth Community

Lex Lutherborrow

Lillian's (Lillian Howell Project Inc.)

Marist180

Mercy Community Services (Perth)

Mission Australia -

Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Service

Moree Family Support

NCOSS

Pathfinders

Platform Youth Services

Port Stephens Family and

Neighbourhood Services

Project Youth

Property Industry Foundation

Samaritans Maitland

Settlement Services International (SSI)

Shelter NSW

Social Futures

South East Women and Children's
Services (SEWACS)

Southern Youth and Family Services

St Laurence House

Stepping Stone House

Taldumande Youth Services

The Family Centre (St Joseph's
Youth Service)

The Foyer Foundation

The Salvation Army - Oasis

Youth Support

Twenty10

Uniting

Uniting Dubbo

Veritas House

Wesley Mission

YES Youth and Family Services

Youth Action

Youth Off The Streets

Youth Resolutions

YP Space MNC

Community/ business partners

We are exceptionally grateful to the following additional organisations and people who have supported our work during the year. This work has supported our sector as well as children and young people.

Property Industry Foundation, UnLtd, PHD Media and Ogilvy Australia

- while already acknowledged throughout this report, again, a huge thank you for significantly growing the Youth Homelessness Matters Day campaign, and for the massive pro bono creative production, media and distribution of the Young and Alone campaign.

For Purpose - a social enterprise supporting Yfoundations with digital tools and website design and development.

Miscible: Molly Patton - supporting Yfoundations with our design work.

Government partners

Homes NSW

NSW Department of Communities
and Justice

NSW Ministry of Health



Charity tick

Yfoundations is proud to be a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission, and has the highest commitment to transparency, accountability and governance.





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Eora Nation, Redfern NSW 2016
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