



Yfoundations welcome the boost to JobSeeker and Youth Allowance Centrelink Payment, but warn increases need to be ongoing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

25th March 2020

Yfoundations welcomes the government's decision to increase the JobSeeker Payment, formally known as Newstart, as well as the Youth Allowance Payment through the temporary introduction of a coronavirus supplement of \$550 per fortnight, ostensibly doubling the welfare payments for the next six months.

Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg confirmed that the temporary payment will be paid to new and existing recipients of JobSeeker (Newstart), Youth Allowance, Austudy, Abstudy, Parenting Payment, Farm Household Allowance, and Special Benefit payments.

The payments will commence in April, and asset tests and waiting times will be waived.

Students on Youth Allowance, Abstudy, or Austudy were initially not included as part of the coronavirus stimulus package, but the government has revised the decision last-minute, which will help support more than 230,000 full-time students.

The Morrison government has also revealed that from 13th July, it will offer a second \$750 stimulus payment for social security, veteran, and other income support recipients and concession card holders.

Yfoundations CEO Pam Barker said the boost is a welcome relief for many vulnerable young people.

"Young people typically rely on casual and seasonal work to get by, but the recent droughts, bushfires, and now coronavirus, has significantly decreased work opportunities, and there is simply not enough jobs available. This is causing fear and anxiety for this already vulnerable group. This \$550 temporary increase of welfare payments is a reprieve for those at risk of losing their housing. We must ensure that there is a long-term permanent increase to the JobSeeker and Youth Allowance payments, beyond six-months, to build a more robust welfare safety net for our most vulnerable young people".

At the 2016 Census, more than 9,000 children and young people (12-24 years old) were homeless across NSW. The coronavirus pandemic, in addition to the recent drought and bushfires, is likely to increase the rates of youth homelessness for years to come.



“We are already seeing a rise in youth street sleeping over the last couple of days. What is our government doing to stop this increase from occurring? How will we continue to support our most vulnerable youth in this time of crisis?”

Barker continued: “Where does a child or young person go if they have no housing or income? Young people relying on the support of specialist youth homelessness services. That is unless they can access financially adequate Centrelink payments to help raise them out of disadvantage and into independent stable living”.

For media enquires contact: Pam Barker, CEO Yfoundations ceo@yfoundations.org.au or 0425 228 758

About Yfoundations

Yfoundations is the peak body for youth homelessness in NSW. It represents young people at risk of and experiencing homelessness in NSW, and also represents the services that provide direct support to children and young people.

<http://yfoundations.org.au/>

Since it was founded as the “Youth Refuge Action Group” in 1979, Yfoundations has been supporting young people who are at risk of and experiencing homelessness and works collaboratively with members, NGOs, government departments and community members, to provide policy and structural advocacy, services for young people, health projects, and research and sector development.

Yfoundations believes that with access to mechanisms that support the development and attainment of each foundation, a young person is more likely to enter adulthood with the skills, interests, competencies and healthy behaviours necessary build a productive and bright future.