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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH) finalised

After much deliberation, the NYCH Board has decided to finalise NYCH as an entity and hand over the remaining assets and Youth Homelessness Matters Day Campaign management to Yfoundations.

For more than 20 years, NYCH has brought together representatives from each state to form a collective voice that has advocated and lobbied for a national plan to end youth homelessness. The coalition has brought together generations of leaders and advocates in the youth homelessness space and provided a space for sharing ideas and knowledge across the country. For significant periods of its history, NYCH received funding to undertake various activities and coordinate the national voice.

Over the last few years, this has proven difficult, with the loss of funding for homelessness peaks and a heavy reliance on the time of volunteer board members. NYCH has shifted to prioritising its members' time and remaining financial resources into driving the YHMD Campaign each year. Despite the challenges faced by NYCH, YHMD has continued to grow in reach and awareness and has become an important opportunity to raise the voice and experiences of young people across the country.

In 2020, the NYCH board reflected on its role and capacity to function as an Incorporated Association with the obligations that underpin such an organisational structure. A consensus has been reached by the board that a more sustainable future is needed, one that preserves a collective national voice and can drive YHMD each year without the significant administrative burden that its membership currently holds.

Yfoundations is the peak body for youth homelessness in NSW, whilst also holding national influence in the homeless space. Yfoundations CEO Pam Barker has been the Co-chair of NYCH alongside Andrew Kazim for the last 18 months.

Nerida Ackerman, Yfoundations President, says “the invitation to manage the YHMD campaign is an honour for Yfoundations. We are excited to support Youth Homelessness Matters Day nationally. We have a long history and involvement with NYCH, it makes sense for us to manage the national campaign moving forward. We thank the NYCH Board for their management over the last 25 years, we look forward to launching the YHMD campaign in April 2022”.

Yfoundations Board will be calling on national sector homelessness representatives in the coming months to form a national advisory to support the YHMD 2022 campaign.

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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.

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 to build a productive and bright future.
www.yfoundations.org.au

About Pam Barker, Chief Executive Officer, Yfoundations

Pam Barker is the CEO of Yfoundations, the peak body for youth homelessness in NSW. With a background in psychology, Pam is passionate about helping young people out of homelessness through a mixture of advocacy and leadership.

Pam brings extensive experience across the not-for-profit sector, including roles at the Black Dog Institute, Open Doors Youth Service, and ACON. She works tirelessly to achieve better long-term outcomes for children and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Especially those in out-of-home care, LGBTIQ+ and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people.

Pam sits on the board of My Foundations Youth Housing, WayAhead Mental Health Association, Homelessness Australia (HA) and is accredited by the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Her experience includes youth services, homelessness prevention, mental health programs, and policy reform.