

Concerning new figures reveal youth homelessness has risen in NSW

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) has today released data revealing that youth homelessness has increased in NSW in the past 12 months.

In 2018-19, 18,837 young people aged 15-24 years old presented alone to Specialist Homelessness Services in NSW, making up 25.6% of all clients. These statistics represent an increase of 728 young people from the previous year.

The data reveals that the main reason young people sought assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services in 2018-19 were; Housing Crisis (19%), Family and Domestic Violence (15.9%), Inadequate or inappropriate dwelling conditions (11.7%), Relationship/Family Breakdown (11.6%), and Financial Difficulties (8%).

Young people that experience homelessness face more significant disadvantage than other groups as they lack family and community support, increasing the demand for crisis and transitional housing assistance. We know that ending youth homelessness requires a whole of government response, including; early intervention, prevention, and access to safe, secure affordable housing to support young people when they need it most.

More broadly, NSW homelessness services have the highest rate of unmet need in Australia. Homelessness services in NSW are funded to support around 58,000 clients, yet the 2018-19 data revealed that over 73,500 clients presented to Specialist Homelessness Services across the state. Urgent action is required to address the growing need for homelessness support services across NSW.

"Despite reducing youth homelessness being one of the Premier's Priorities, these figures show that young people increasingly require support from homelessness services. Urgent investment is required to prevent youth homelessness and to provide affordable housing options for young people". - Pam Barker, Yfoundations CEO

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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.

<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.