



A national day to raise awareness  
about child and youth homelessness

[www.yhmd.org.au](http://www.yhmd.org.au)

END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

## It's time to face the reality of Australia's youth homelessness crisis

Youth Homelessness Matters Day – April 15, 2026

Today, 15 April, is Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD), a national campaign that raises awareness of the experiences of children and young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and housing insecurity. Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) CEO, Kylie Wallace, hopes that in its 20<sup>th</sup> year, YHMD can inspire action to end the crisis of youth homelessness in Western Australia.

“Western Australia is in a youth homelessness crisis,” said Ms Wallace. “In the richest state in Australia, all children and young people should have a safe place to call home. Today reminds us that we need communities and Governments to work together to end youth homelessness.”

More than 2000 children and young people are supported by specialist homelessness services on any given day in WA, a 17 per cent increase from the year before. Youth homelessness often does not happen in isolation, as young people face several compounding factors such as family and intimate partner violence (FIPV) and mental health challenges. Kaya, a member of YACWA's Youth Homelessness Advisory Council (YHAC), recalled how isolating homelessness can be for a young person.

“It was so difficult to find help as nobody knew how they could support me,” said Kaya. “It felt like there was no point reaching out for help, and that I needed to hide what I was going through. Without these supports, I had to stay with an abusive partner to keep a roof over my head and wasn't able to heal from what I went through.” This YHMD, a coalition of services and peak bodies have come together to raise awareness of youth homelessness. The Ending Child and Youth Homelessness (ECYH) Coalition, founded by Mission Australia, Vinnies WA and Indigo Junction and now supported by YACWA, Shelter WA, WACOSS, the WA Alliance to End Homelessness and other youth accommodation service providers, represent the communal efforts needed to drive change.

“The Ending Child and Youth Homelessness Coalition demonstrates the power of collective advocacy in creating better futures for all young people. These collaborative efforts have enabled us to establish sector-driven initiatives, such as the Youth Rough Sleeper Coordination Group, to find safe accommodation for children and young people experiencing homelessness,” said Elise Jorgensen, Mission Australia's Homelessness Regional Leader and coalition representative.

Despite efforts from the community services sector, the supports for young people are severely underfunded. More than half of the children and young people presenting to these services are

turned away because they are not sufficiently funded to accommodate them. This is traumatic for young people and the frontline services supporting them.

“In order for us to end youth homelessness, we need to fund and resource the necessary services to support them. They provide young people with safe, stable environments, which enable them to rebuild their lives and achieve secure, long-term housing outcomes. We must invest in these essential services so that young people can be supported towards a better future,” said Aimee Robinson, Coordinator for Passages Youth Engagement Hub Perth.

Young people who reach their full potential are an economic and social asset to Australia. State, Territory and Federal governments have a responsibility to invest in solutions to end youth homelessness and to adequately resource these services on an ongoing basis. This was echoed by Anna, a YHAC committee member, who emphasised how these supports impacted her.

“[The services] helped me navigate day-to-day life in Australia and taught me how to live independently. I became more confident in myself as a person, and was encouraged to go to university. These services helped me understand the value of my voice, which I hope to use to create meaningful changes for other young people facing economic disadvantages.”

We need to prioritise ending child and youth homelessness as a matter of urgency. Community members can support the YHMD campaign by educating, activating, donating and advocating – visit the [YHMD website](#).

State and Federal governments must commit to long-term funding for services to provide essential supports for young people experiencing homelessness. This includes adequately funding services across the housing continuum and addressing the root causes of youth homelessness. We look forward to continuing to work with the WA and Federal governments to ensure Western Australia is a safe place to call home for all children and young people.



## Contacts

### For media comment:

Kylie Wallace

CEO – Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

[ceo@yacwa.org.au](mailto:ceo@yacwa.org.au)

### Communication enquiries and information on YHMD:

Alicia Keenan

Policy and Advocacy Officer – Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia

[alicia@yacwa.org.au](mailto:alicia@yacwa.org.au)