

Member Briefing: Victoria's Housing Reforms

with **Hon. Harriet Shing**

Minister for Housing, Equality and Water



Acknowledgement of Country

The Centre acknowledges the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation, whose lands we are meeting on today.

We respectfully acknowledge all Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present.



Illustration of the Kulin Nations by **Nakia Cadd**, Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Bunitj, Boon Wurrung, Taungurung woman.



Introduction



Deb Tsorbaris

CEO

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare



“It’s nice to have a house; it’s nice to know there’s always somewhere to go. It’s not very nice if you don’t know where you’ll go the next night.”

- **Han, 11 years old**

“We were homeless for two months, living in a tent in my auntie’s backyard. It felt like camping, which was fun for a while. Then we had emergency housing, but the stove didn’t work, and all we had was a microwave. I didn’t sleep much because the beds were so uncomfortable, and I was too tired to go to school.”

- **Warren, 11 years old**

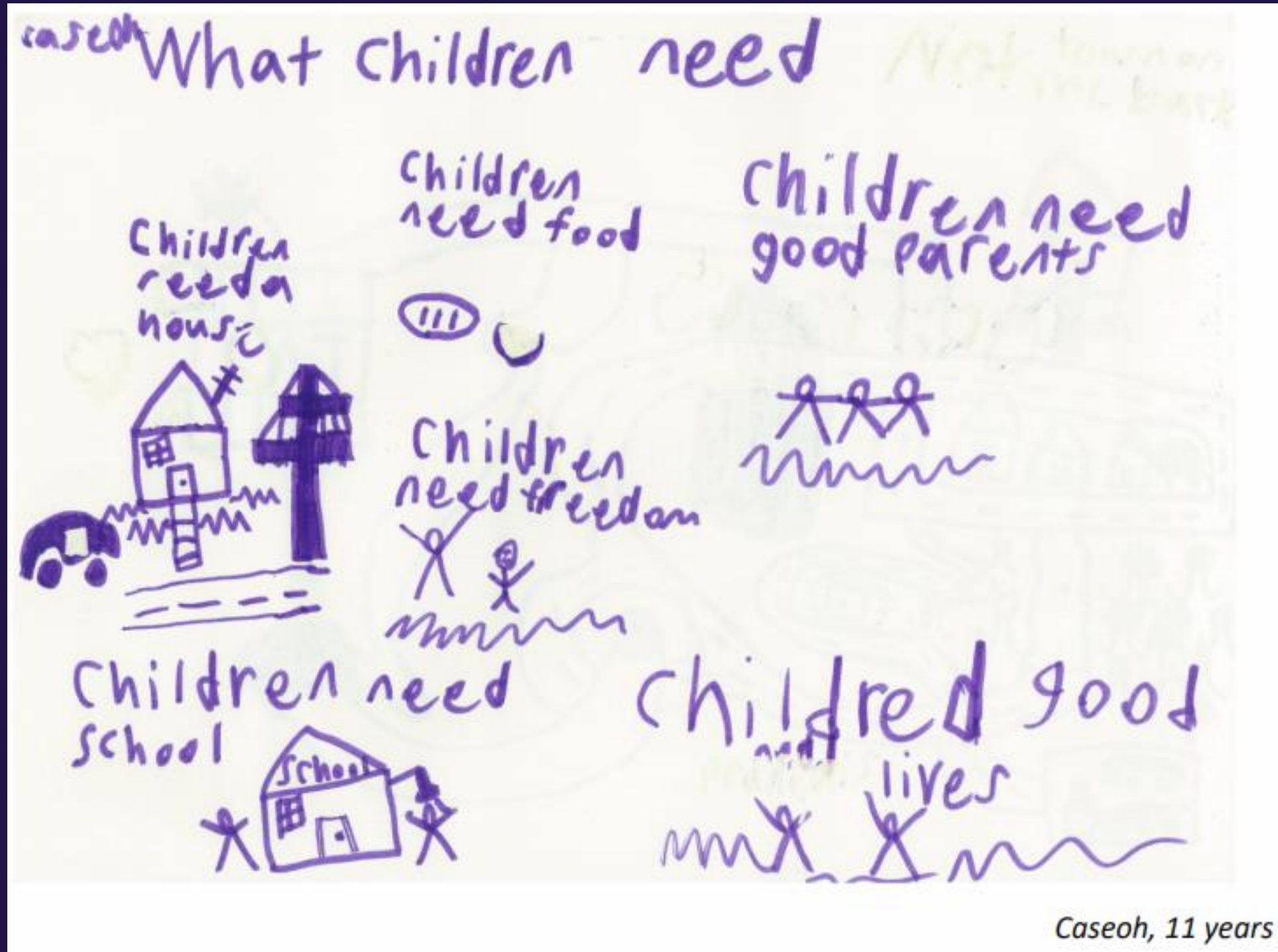
“[Children need] a good house, a sustainable house... somewhere that doesn’t fall apart. Kids need freedom to play and to be happy.”

- **Caseoh, 11 years old**



More for Children Issues Paper #2: Housing
Bessell, S., O'Sullivan, C., & Lang, M.
Children's Policy Centre, ANU (Oct 2024)





Caseoh, 11 years

Briefing on Victoria's Housing Reforms



The Hon. Harriet Shing

Minister for Housing, Equality, and Water

Panel Session

Member Solutions: Homelessness and Housing for Children, Young People, and Families



Laura Mahoney
Executive Director -
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Launch Housing



Paul McDonald
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IT'S TIME TO END
HOMELESSNESS

Member Solutions: Homelessness and Housing Challenges for Children and Families

Laura Mahoney

Executive Director

Homelessness Solutions and Impact



launchhousing.org.au

2024 SNAPSHOT

This year, Launch Housing assisted families and young people in the following ways:

2,741 families supported.

80 families (including 142 children) supported in transitional housing.

196 children supported across our Education Pathways Program.

74% of young people leaving our Foyers were enrolled in study, employed or both.

49 families supported in our families crisis accommodation.

Highlights

Piloting new solutions to support an overburdened system

Intervening early to break cycles of homelessness

Advocating for systems change and coordination





PILOTING NEW SOLUTIONS

The homelessness services system lacks appropriate crisis, transitional or long-term housing to support increasing numbers of women and children escaping violence to rebuild, recover and thrive. Women escaping family and domestic violence make up almost 40% of all people seeking homelessness services in Victoria.

Viv's Place: Rebuilding and recovering from trauma

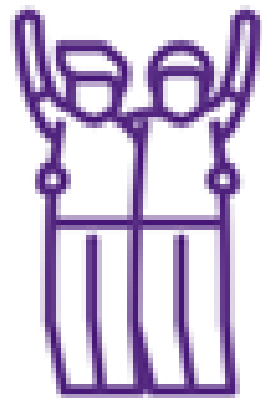
- Since opening, has supported 75 women and 103 children
- 15 exits to date, 13 resulting in women moving into private rentals or long-term housing with family or friends
- Recipient of three awards in the past year
- Funding for additional wraparound support on-site is a key challenge

Cornelia Program: Thriving mums and bubs

- Partnership with the Royal Women's Hospital and Housing First
- 12-months supported housing and maternal and child health care
- 48 women and 29 babies supported in the past year
- 26 women exited the program, with 22 moving to social housing, 2 into permanent housing, 1 with family, and 1 into a private rental

INTERVENING EARLY TO BREAK CYCLES OF HOMELESSNESS

Launch Housing's early interventions and support programs for children and young people, like the Education First Youth Foyers and the Education Pathways Program, are helping children and young people at key stages of life and learning.



Education First Youth Foyers

- Integrated on-site TAFE education and safe, supported accommodation for young people aged 16-24.
- 'Advantaged thinking' approach taps into the goals and ambitions of young people, nurtures their talent while building skills for life.
- 578 young people have graduated from our Education First Youth Foyers since the first Foyer opened in 2013.
- Across all Youth Foyers in Australia, 80% students exit into stable housing and 65% secure employment.
- \$172,000 in cost savings to the Government per Foyer student, compared to a similar young person in other SHS accommodation over 40 years.¹

The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (2020) endorsed the EFY Foyer model as culturally appropriate and responsive service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

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1. 'Under One Roof, the Social and Economic Impact of Youth Foyers report' commissioned by The Foyer Foundation and prepared by Accenture on behalf of FoyerInvest, December 2022.

STORIES FROM BROADMEADOWS



2014 – Kayla

Then: Studied VCE
Now: Clinical Trials Coordinator

'Foyer helped me to establish the life skills required to live an independent and healthy lifestyle — these are skills I still carry today.'



2014 – Chrissy

Then: Completed a Diploma of Community Services and studied Aboriginal Art at Kangan TAFE

Now: Working towards being an Art Therapist. Working at VACCA in Aboriginal Family preservation and reunification.



2017 – Blaise

Then: Studied Diploma of Mental Health
Now: Youth Development Worker

'I moved in during a communal cook-up which was awesome – when I smell hash browns I still think of the foyer because that was my first meal there.'



2018 – Ralph

Then: Studied Diploma of Community Services

Now: Completing Bachelor of Criminology, Human Rights Division Case Officer

What kids have said:

'I love coming to school every day now.'

What parents have said:

'EPP made such a difference to my children, they need more funding. I know that one of my children who has selective mutism, wouldn't talk at all before, but now does talk to adults she trusts.'

What schools have said:

'I really appreciate the enthusiasm and commitment that you have to improving the lived experience of our most vulnerable families.'

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EARLY INTERVENTIONS (CONT.)

Education Pathways Program: A bright future

- Supports children impacted by homelessness to engage with school and address learning gaps.
- This year: supported 196 children remained engaged in school, 66 received developmental assessments
- Delivered 5,640 breakfasts and made 372 referrals to healthcare providers
- Trauma-informed training for 100 primary school teachers, enhancing whole-of-school responses

Specialist Children's Support Services: Holistic Healing

- Holistic support - Provides tailored assessments, enhanced case management, therapeutic support and recreational programs for children and families.
- Supported 211 children this year, focusing on developing children's social, emotional and physical wellbeing and improving educational and developmental support.
- Continued increase in demand (increase in number of children supported for third consecutive year)

OUR NEXT STEPS TO A BETTER SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

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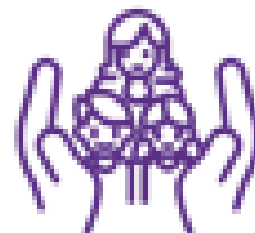
Resourcing

- Many of our support programs for families and children sit at the intersection of multiple policy areas.
- We continue to draw on corporate and philanthropic partners for resourcing in this space.



Holistic design

- We continue to advocate for the re-design parts of the homelessness system to cater for families, children and young people.



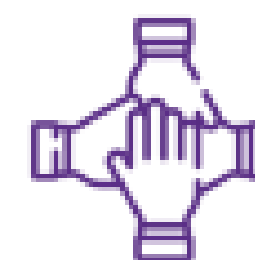
Combining supports

- We know how important the combination of long-term housing and wraparound support is, including for victim survivors of family and domestic violence.



Scaling up

- We are focused on scaling up services and programs we know work including Viv's Place, Cornelia Program, Education First Youth Foyers and EPP.



Working together

- We have big goals and know that we need to work together to achieve them.
- Collaboration is particularly important when tackling complex problems such as these.

VICTORIA'S MOST OVERREPRESENTED, HOMELESS COHORT, IS YOUNG PEOPLE TRANSITIONING OUT OF STATE CARE

63%

of the Australian youth homeless population are care leavers

35%

of care leavers will have 5 places of abode within 12 months

36%

of care leavers exit directly into homelessness

HOUSING CARE LEAVERS CONSIDERATIONS

800 young people (per annum) transition out of care in Victoria.

50% will need a housing pathway at point of exit from care.

- Care leavers are not a homogeneous group
- They don't have rental histories nor guarantors to get into private rental on their own
- Mentorship, support and ongoing maintenance of housing is often required for this cohort to build their tenancy histories
- Many care leavers cannot house share, like other young adults this age

HOUSING OPTIONS FOR CARE LEAVERS

- Proven models that are buildable, affordable, companionable, and enjoyable (ie cluster-type Village 21 models)
- Utility of Home Stretch allowance (\$16K pa) to give care leavers ‘buying power’ in private rental (e.g. Bendigo ‘Housing Alliance’ Initiative)
- ‘Parental approach’: Established pathway by the state, from care to housing placement for care leavers
- Compass (SIB) take outs for future investment



Shorna Moore

Head of Policy, Advocacy & Government
Relations

Melbourne City Mission





Fix housing for
young people in
Australia

**Home
Time.**

Fix housing for young people



Simon Newport

CEO

Homes Victoria



Thank you for joining us.

Continue the conversation:

-  Centre For Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
-  Centre For Excellence in Child and Family Welfare
-  @CFEFCFW

