No child left outside:

Child and youth homelessness matters webinar

16 April 2025



Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Acknowledgment

The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare Tas Vic acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the many lands on which we meet today and acknowledges the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community across Lutruwita.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we honour their enduring strength and aspirations for the future of their young people, communities and lands.



Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Panelists



Cadhla O'Sullivan



Jurek Stopczynski



Eleri Morgan-Thomas



Andrea Witt

Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

- 122,000+ people were estimated to be experiencing homelessness at the 2021 Census
- 2,350 people experiencing homelessness that night were in Tasmania
- 25% of the total number of people recorded as experiencing homelessness in Tasmania were between 12-24 years old.
- In 2023, there were 1700+ instances of children and young people between 8-17 years presenting without a parent or guardian to specialist homelessness services in Tasmania



Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Cadhla O'Sullivan

Research Fellow, Children's Policy Centre,
Australian National University



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No Child Left Outside: Child and Youth Homelessness Matters Webinar

Children's experiences of unaffordable, inadequate or insecure housing



Drawn by 'Sophie', 7 years

Children's Policy Centre

• More for Children

Research team:

Professor Sharon Bessell, Director Children's Policy Centre

Dr Cadhla O'Sullivan, Research Fellow Children's Policy Centre

Dr. Megan Lang, previous Research Fellow

Celia Vuckovic, Research and Communications Officer

Clara Siagian, Research Officer

Dr Adele Chynoweth, Senior Research Officer

Heather Fitt, Senior Research Officer



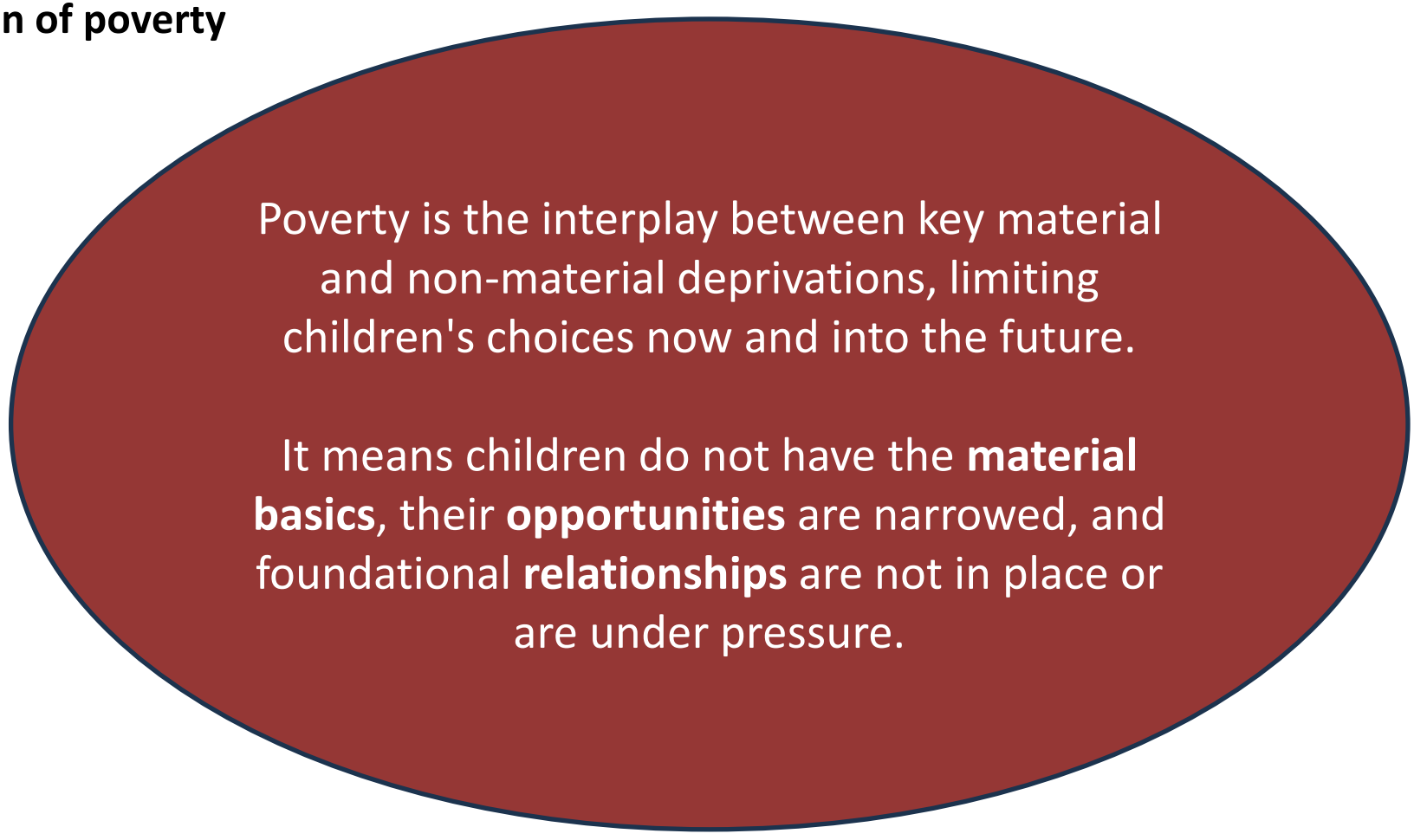
Child poverty must be understood from a child standpoint developed from listening deeply to children's lived experiences through rigorous and ethical qualitative research

Measurement should respond to a definition of poverty that comes from a child standpoint

Some aspects of child poverty cannot be measured but are important to understand and respond to if children are to live free from poverty

Child poverty has multiple, intersecting dimensions and is caused, maintained, and exacerbated by unequal social and economic structures

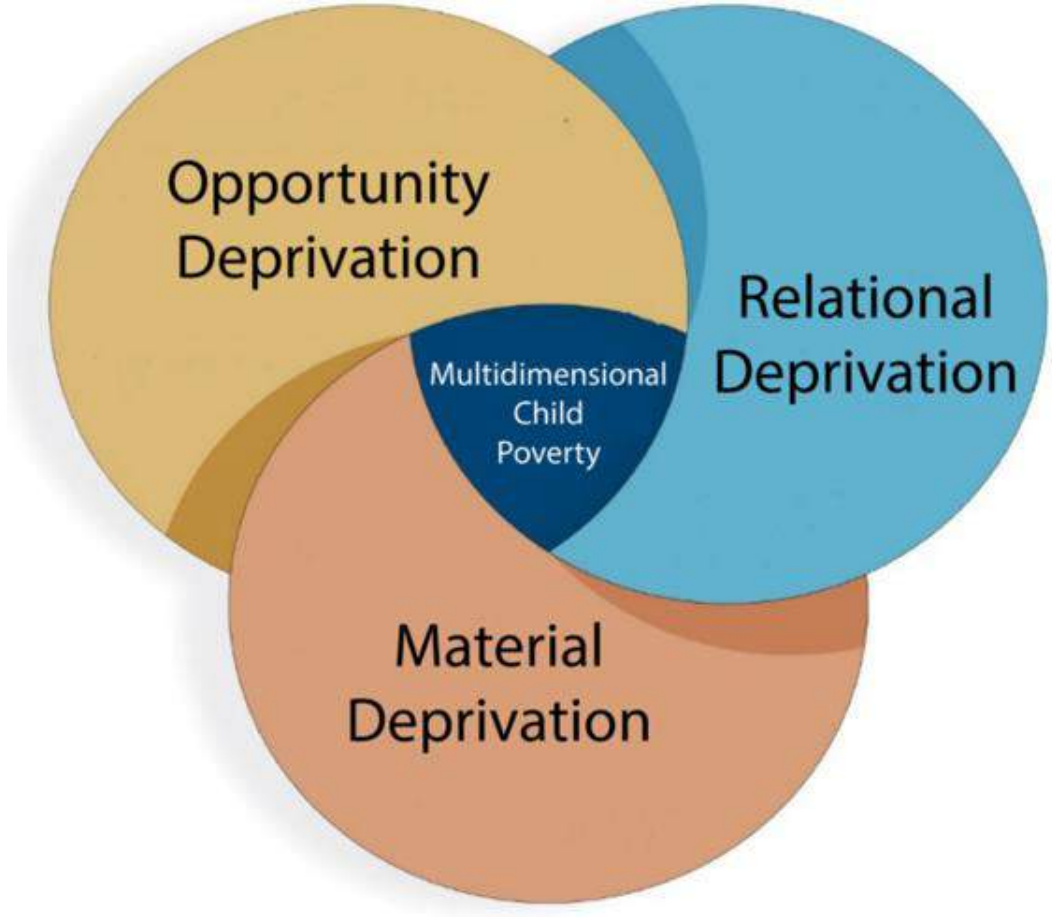
A child-centred definition of poverty



The MOR Framework

The MOR Framework provides a means of conceptualising, defining and understanding the impacts of child poverty and is able to guide the development of policy and services in ways that are child-centred and place-based responses.

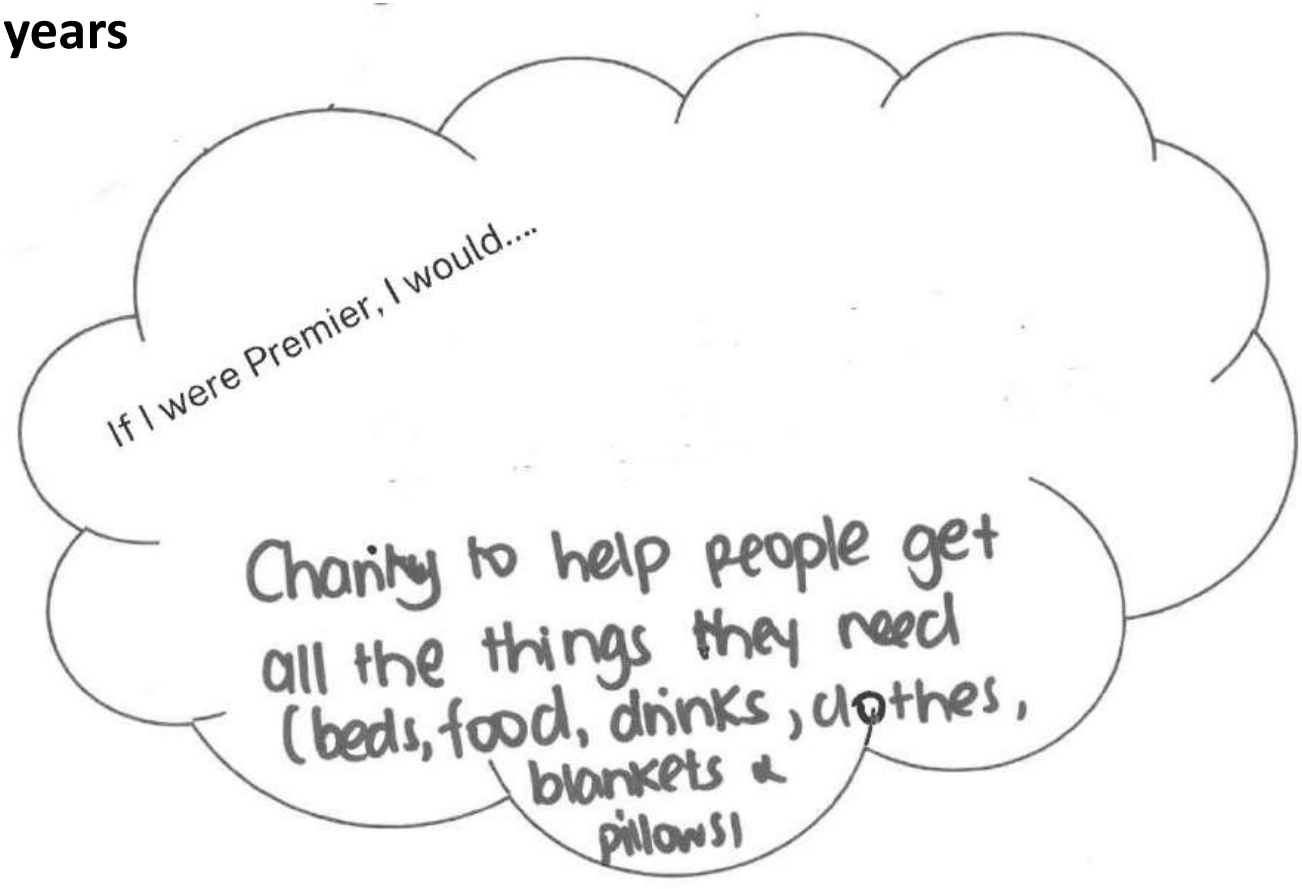
The MOR Framework themes will fit to each dimension conceptually.



MOR Dimensions



‘Krystal’, 7 years



‘Krystal’, 7 years

If I were an adult decision maker I would make a charity to help people get all the things they need like a bed, food, drinks, clothes, blankets and pillows

‘Warren’, 11 years…

We were once homeless for I think 2 months, we had to live in our auntie’s backyard, in a tent, which I actually thought was quite fun. It was like camping, and then we had an emergency unit for like 12 months and now we have a house.

[In emergency housing] we only had a stove that didn’t work so we couldn’t really cook anything. We only had a microwave, so I would just usually just have a cup of noodles. We were there for 4 months. Our beds were like really uncomfortable, so it was hard to sleep. I didn’t really sleep much, and I was too tired to even go to school and catch the bus.

Warren, 11 years

‘Max’, 12 years…

We're like living behind a church, so we're homeless and just living behind a church in a rental place until we can find a place. Only 3 [bedrooms] but there’s 5 kids plus mum. It’s hard. I've always wanted my own room, but I've never had it.

Max, 12 years

No Child Left Outside: Child and Youth Homelessness Matters Webinar

Thank you for listening

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Drawn by 'Sophie', 7 years

Children's Policy Centre

Jurek Stopczynski

State Director Tasmania & Victoria, Mission Australia



Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Eleri Morgan-Thomas

CEO, Homes Tasmania



Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare

Youth2Independence: Housing pathways for young people

Youth Homelessness Matters Day

16 April 2025

Homes Tasmania

Building homes, creating communities.

Overview

- Housing pathways for young people
- The Youth2Independence service model
- Outcomes, challenges and opportunities
- Questions and discussion

Stable housing is critical for youth development and long-term success



Safe, stable, appropriate housing is critical for wellbeing and other outcomes for children and young people.



Young people are a priority cohort in the *Tasmanian Housing Strategy 2023-43* and *Action Plan 2023-27*



Homes Tasmania spends $50 million annually on Specialist Homelessness Services, including accommodation for children and young people.

Housing programs for children and young people

Crisis	Transitional	Long-term	Care
Youth at Risk Centres	Y2I Cluster Homes	Social housing	Salaried care
Youth shelters	Y2I Supported Accommodation Facilities	Affordable private rental	Therapeutic Residential Care
	Y2I Share Homes	Private rental	Family-based (kinship and foster) care
		Home ownership	



Housing Connect



Advice and Referral Line/ Child Safety

Homes Tasmania

Youth2Independence (Y2I)

- Three housing models aimed at increasing independence to ensure successful housing outcomes:
  - Supported accommodation facilities
  - Share homes
  - Cluster homes.

- Mixed gender youth aged 16-24.



Y2I Supported Accommodation Facilities



Campbell Street Y2I Supported Accommodation Facility (SAF),managed by Anglicare. This site has 26 self-contained units.

- Self-contained studio style units with 24/7 onsite support.
- Close to TAFE's, colleges and other essential services.
- Young people must be assessed for readiness to engage in education or be actively seeking employment and will need to sign the 'Deal' to complete Certificate 1 in Developing Independence.
- Maximum stay of 2 years or age out at 25 years.

Y2I Cluster and Share Homes

- Young people who need support to transition to independence and may or may not be ready to engage in education or training
- Cluster homes are five stand-alone modular homes with an on-site support in a sixth home.
- Share homes are social housing properties with multiple young people as tenants.
- Maximum stay of 2 years or age out at 25 years.



Newnham cluster home, managed by CatholicCare. There are two share homes nearby.

We use a tailored service model for young people



Advantaged Thinking



The Deal



‘Readiness’

Outcomes

- Tafe delivers a Certificate 1 in Developing Independence to tenants.
- Tenants engage in employment, education and/or training while at a Y2I facility.
- Tenants engage or re-engage with family and other supportive services and people in their lives.



Challenges and opportunities

1. There is a range of crisis, transitional and long-term accommodation in Tasmania for young people.
2. Accommodation is often communal or close to other young people, which can create challenges for accommodating young people with complex needs.
3. Services are collaborating to provide improved housing and wellbeing outcomes for young people.

Questions?

Homes Tasmania

Building homes,
creating communities.

www.homestasmania.com.au

Andrea Witt

Executive Manager, Family and Community Services,
CatholicCare Tasmania



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No child left outside:

Child and youth homelessness matters webinar

CatholicCare Tasmania delivers community services across Tasmania to improve the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities

CatholicCare Tasmania is the primary social services agency of the Catholic Church across Tasmania. We have 60 years' experience delivering a wide range of services and support to improve individual, family and community wellbeing. Our services are available and open to all with a particular focus on families, young people and children.

In 2023/24 CatholicCare supported more than 10,000 Tasmanians.

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23 IMPACT 24 REPORT

Supported **young people**

83

with safe accommodation

AK Young Women's Emergency Accommodation provided

1677

nights of safe emergency accomodation were provided

Y2I Homes supported

10

young people into independence

CatholicCare TASMANIA

Our values inform our service delivery what this means in the way we work with Children and Young People

- **Respect for human dignity** - unconditional positive regard.

- **Family** – that family and relational connection matters for children and young people.

- **Participation** – that children and young people are actively included in all aspects of service delivery, 'can use their voice', and that they have opportunity for social participation.

- **Vulnerability** – that the individual needs of children and young people are seen and responded to in a way that ensures safety and stability whilst recognising strengths, and capabilities that are empowering.

- **Solidarity** – recognition that children and young people need social and community connection (including advocacy).

Pathways Responding to Youth/Child Homelessness



- **CatholicCare Affordable Housing**
- **Build Up Tassie**
- **Y2I Homes**
- **St Josephs Affordable Homes**
- **Loreto Housing**

AK (Young Womens Emergency Accommodation)

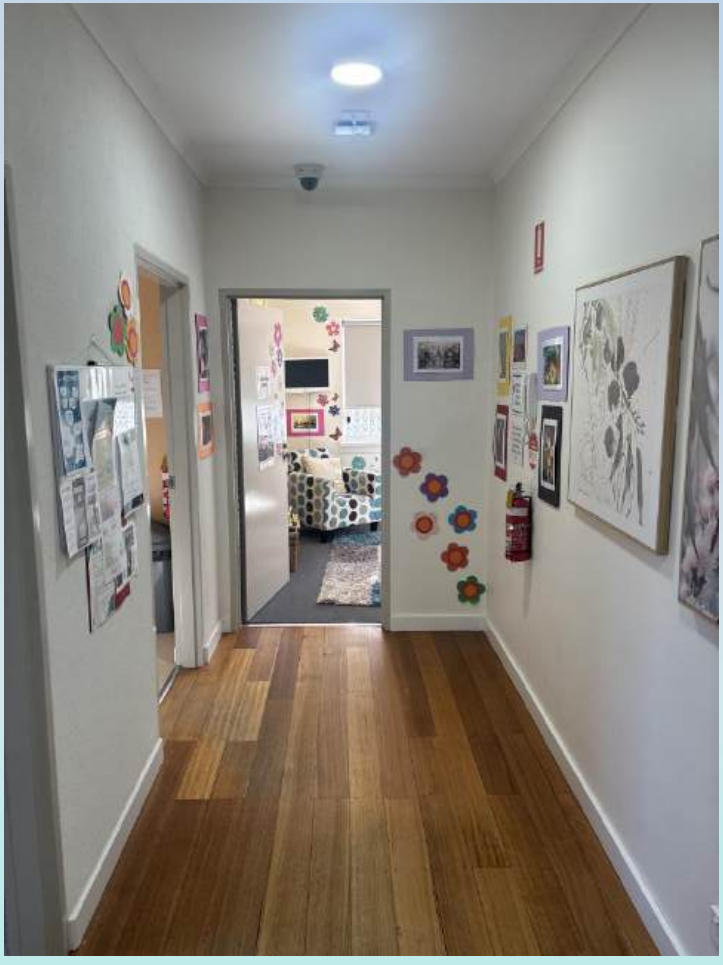
Young women aged 13 – 20, experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

- 10 beds – 1 emergency, 6 communal, 3 independent

Come to us because:

- Family relationship break down
- Family violence, sexual abuse





Presenting Needs

- Crisis response – basic needs
- Isolation and sense of powerlessness
- Family or kin
- Mental or physical illness
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Lack of income
- Education and employment
- Life skill education
- Safety planning and Case Management (Wellbeing Domains)

What we do

- Resolve crisis and meet immediate needs (provide basics, bed, food, personal items, clothes, safety plan, brief intervention).
- Identify opportunities for the young person to make decisions, have options and have control.
- Identify existing connections, strengths and goals.
- Seek to create a pathway for resolution of family, kin or social connections (existing or to build).
- Develop action plan that is driven by the young person across all wellbeing domains.
- Link to specialist services and or longer term supports.
- Support young person to create stability, structure and routine.
- Maintain a living learning environment ensuring life skill education.

Outcomes

- The little things -
  - Immediate crisis addressed
  - Willingness to engage with services
  - Changes and growth in communication and trust
  - Improved nutrition – trying and liking vegies

- The bigger things -
  - Family kin restoration and connection
  - Employment and education engagement
  - Engaged in services
  - Connection bravery and future focused
  - Housing, accommodation
  - Increase consideration of risk consequence

Y2i Homes

Cluster (5 units – Office on site)

- Independent tenancy
- Case Management (YDC)
- Youth Worker on site (mentor role)
- ‘Not yet ready’

Share Homes

- Shared tenancy (2-3)
- Case Management (YDC)
- ‘Working towards Ready’





Our learnings - 2 years in

Challenges

- Balance – working with those that need it vs not setting young people up
- Timing – community mix
- Participation and engagement – learning independence, managing expectations and developing confidence
- Workforce – availability, training and development

Outcomes

- Full or part-time employment.
- Understanding tenancy obligations – reduced rental arears, improved condition of property.
- Life skill development – cooking, cleaning, self advocacy, confidence in communication.
- Community engagement – linked into positive community networks.
- Boundaries – able to set and maintain own boundaries (friends, family, self).
- Financial literacy – increased ability to manage personal finance.
- Civic responsibilities – increased awareness and connection to broader community and responsibilities in being a community member.
- Reduced or ceased self harm and suicide ideation.
- Linked to and maintaining engagement with specialist providers (Mental Health, AoD services, Family Violence and Sexual Assault).
- Drivers license.
- Accreditation – WWVP, White Card, Responsible Service of Alcohol.
- Safe secure housing – private as well as social and community.

What works?

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CatholicCare Tasmania's Framework for Participation



Works	Doesn't Work
Choice – voluntary rather than compulsory, options rather then demands with discussion of potential consequences	**Involuntary service delivery**, lack of discussion about options and the 'why'
Recognising normal **adolescent behaviour** and the importance of **space to learn** considering - - Developmental factors - Impact of trauma	Setting **un-realistic expectation** that do not recognise - - Developmental factors - Impact of trauma
Creating space and supporting YP in setting and maintaining boundaries, routine and learning from decisions/choices they have made	Environments where young people feel controlled, inhibited and not able to make mistakes
Timing – consideration of where the young person is at, how much/what/where/when	Pushing young people to service timeframes, lack of space to be ready to participate, hear and respond
Right response for the person recognising their needs and capabilities	Housing/placement result outcome focus

Children and Young People Tell Us

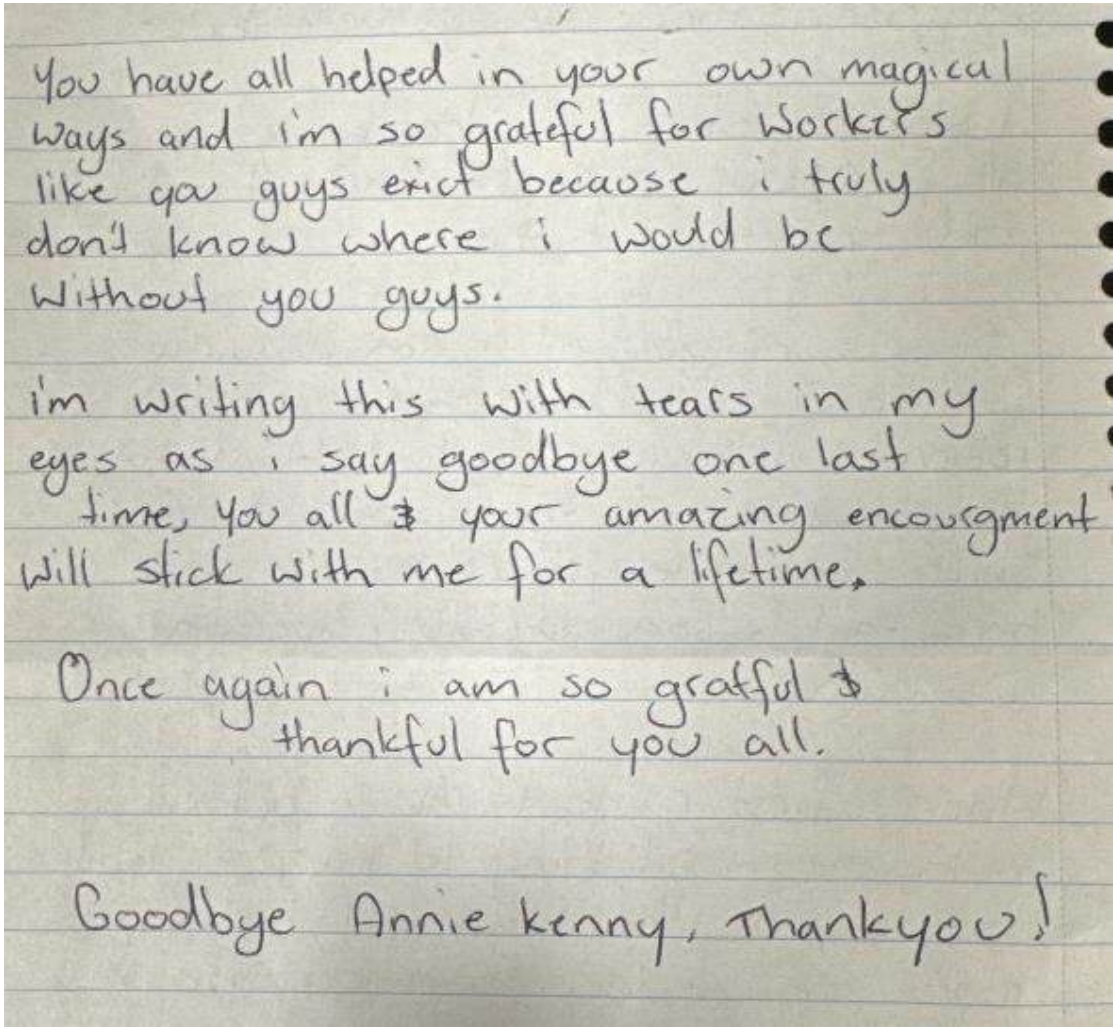
- Children and young people have support needs independent of their parents '***see us'***.
- Being informed about what is happening increases feelings of stability '***believe in us'***.
- Listening to children and young people, their perspectives and needs improves outcomes for the whole family '***hear us'***.
- That sometimes children and young people do not have words so they use behaviour to speak about things that are hard '***see us'***.
- That adults make assumptions about our ability to understand or manage tough things or write us off when we make mistakes '***believe in us'***.
- That sometimes the little steps we take to get there are not seen ***'see us'.***

Thank you

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You have all helped in your own magical ways and i'm so grateful for workers like ya guys exict because i truly don't know where i would be without you guys.

i'm writing this with tears in my eyes as i say goodbye one last time, you all & your amazing encourgment will stick with me for a lifetime.

Once again i am so gratful & thankful for you all.

Goodbye Annie kenny, Thankyou!

Thank you

Continue the conversation:

www.cfecfw.org.au
@CFECFW

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Youth homelessness

No Child Left Outside: Child and Youth Homelessness Matters Webinar



Youth Homelessness Matters Day
Wednesday 16 April 2025

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Young people continue to be overrepresented in the homeless population in Australia



Almost a quarter (23%) of all people experiencing homelessness were aged 12-24 (**overrepresented**, 16% of population)



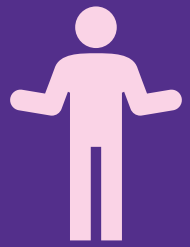
14% were children under 12. Together, **children and young people account for nearly 4 in 10**.



These figures underestimate youth homelessness (couch surfing under-reported).



52,000 young people (aged 15-24) sought support from homelessness services last year



Most young people who sought support from homelessness services **presented alone**, over 38,000



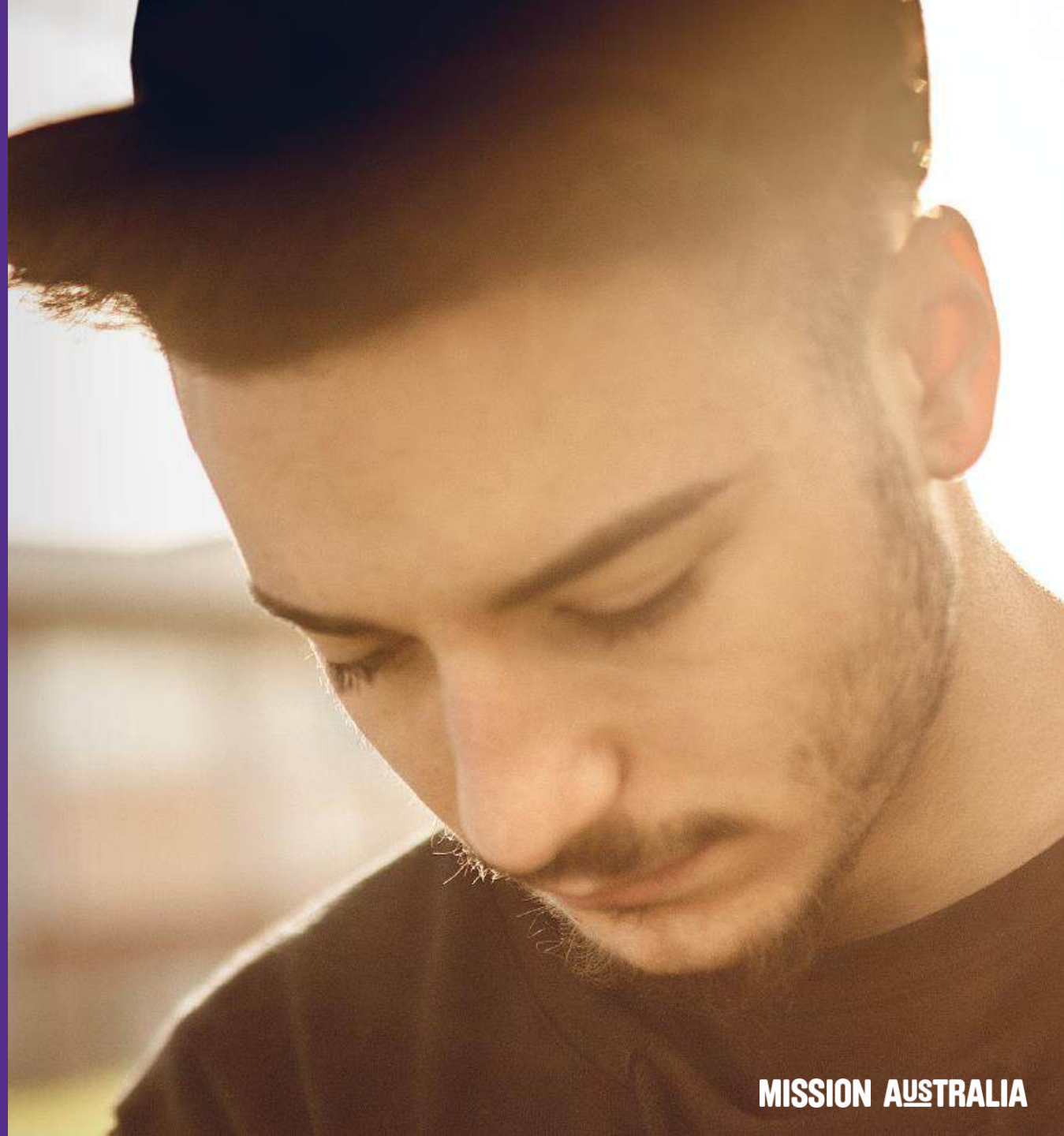
Housing needs are met in a small number of cases. Among young people who presented alone –

- 4.3% who needed long-term housing received it
- 49% who needed short-term /emergency accommodation received it.

The unfair divide

Disadvantage faced by young people who are homeless

A Mission Australia Youth Survey Report





We have seen persistent rates of homelessness in Youth Survey data over time

The Unfair Divide highlights the significant challenges faced by young people with experience of homelessness, compared to their peers with stable housing

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The report covers four life domains to better understand the impact of homelessness:

- Housing and financial circumstances
- Relationships, supports and community connections
- Education and employment
- Mental health and wellbeing



Housing situation for young people who experienced homelessness vs those who did not

POOR OR VERY POOR:

Space to do homework/ study with minimal distractions

22%
5.3%



Distance to your family/friends

20%
6.1%



Distance from public transport

16%
8.5%



Comfort (e.g. good lighting, temperature control)

10%
1.1%



Facilities in good working condition (e.g. bathroom, toilet, kitchen)

9.0%
0.9%



Access to essentials (e.g. food, clothes)

8.9%
0.8%



Access to services you need (e.g. electricity, water, internet)

7.3%
0.7%



Adequate sleeping space (e.g. have your own bed)

7.2%
0.8%



Experienced homelessness in the last year

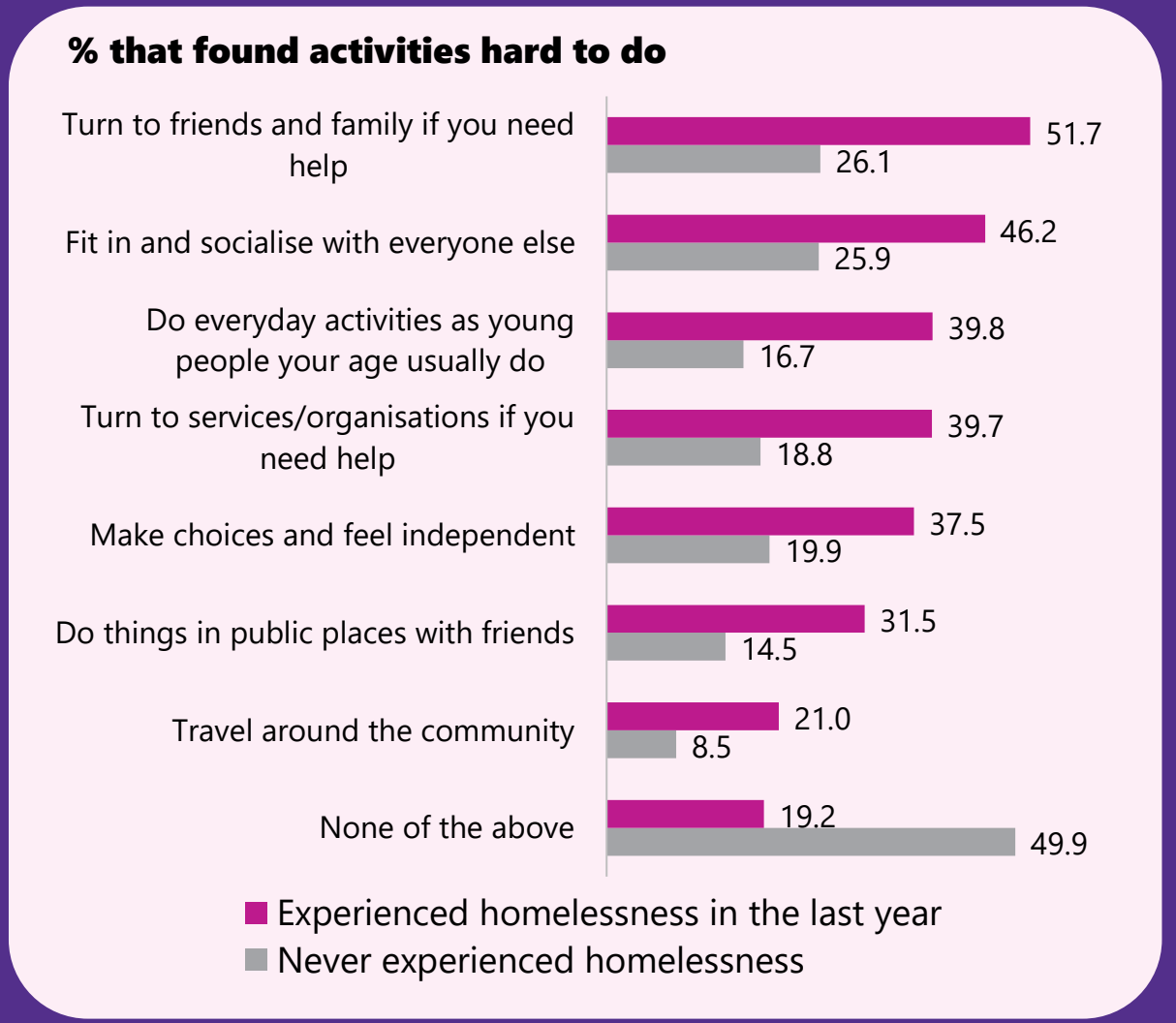
Never experienced homelessness

Moving regularly, needing financial assistance and living in dwellings that do not meet their needs was common

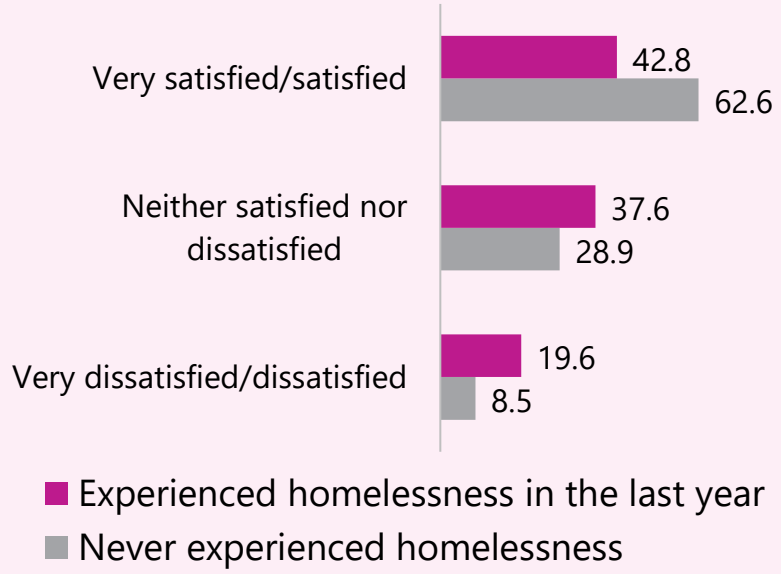
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Key areas of difference exist in their social connectedness, in personal relationships and in interactions with the broader community



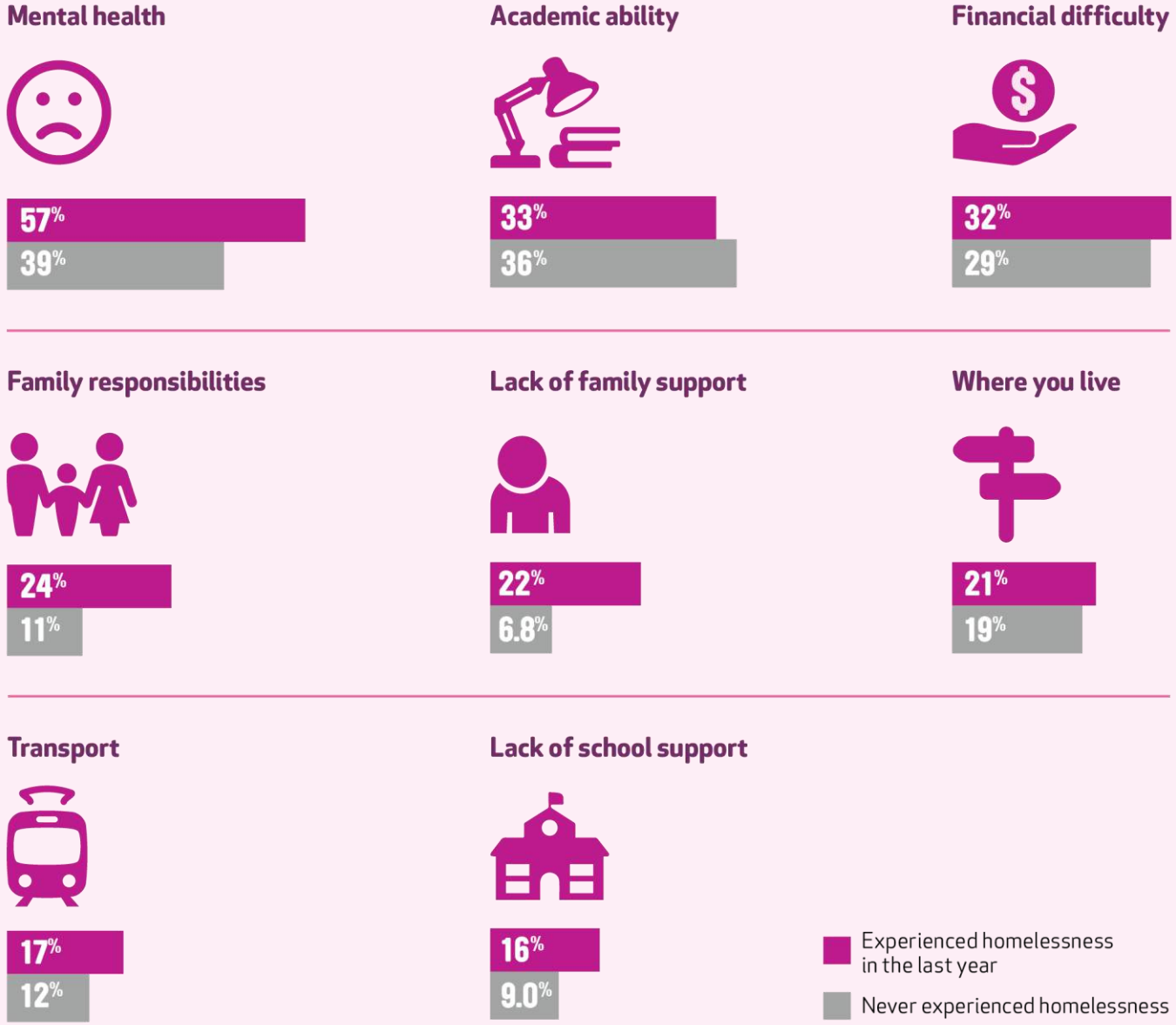


% by level of satisfaction with study

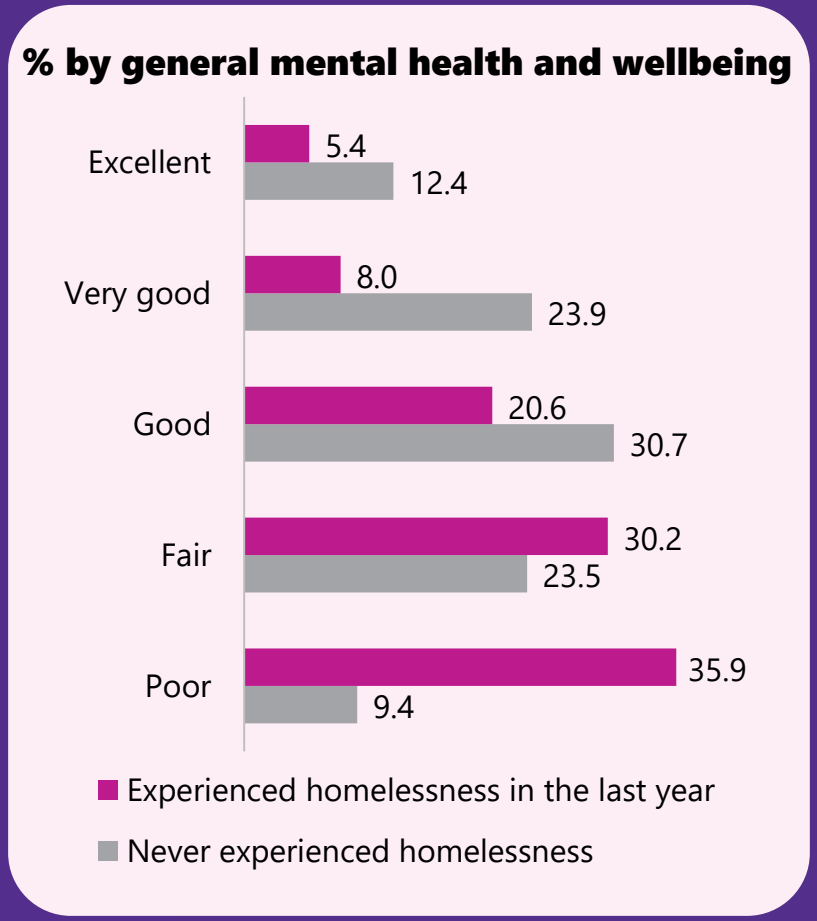


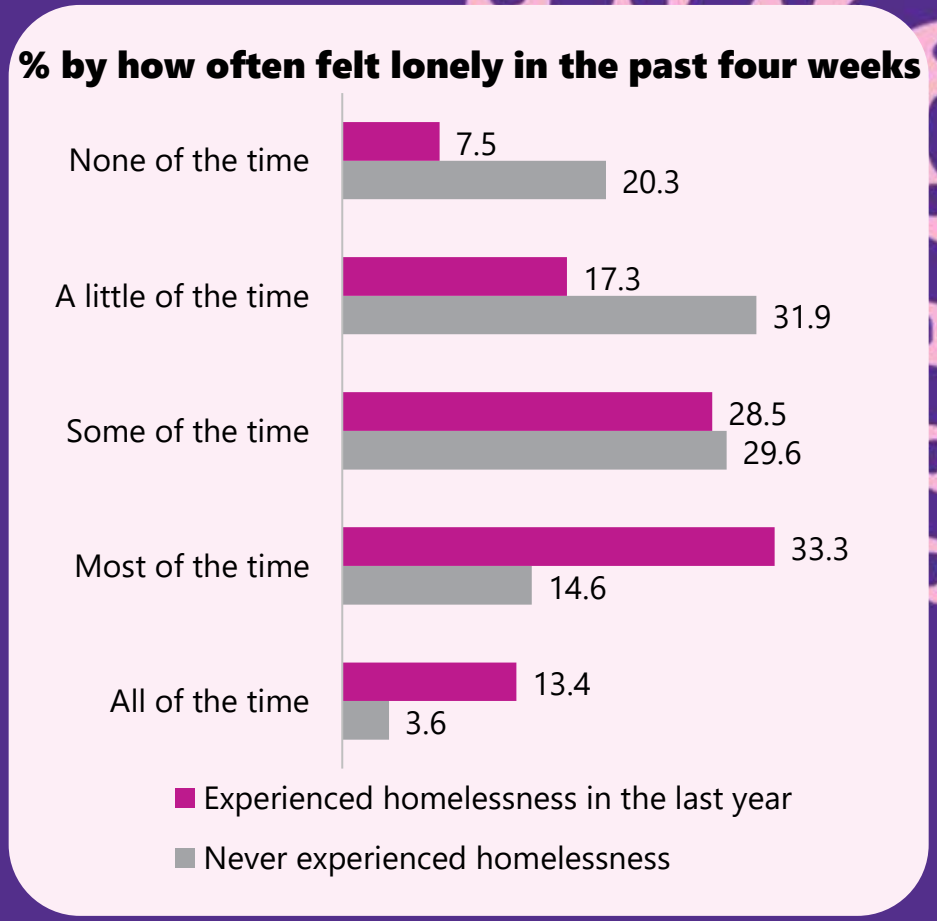
Many were pursuing study and work, but dissatisfaction and barriers were more prevalent

Top barriers to achieving work/study goals for young people who experienced homelessness vs those who did not



There is a strong relationship between mental ill-health and homelessness, and our data continues to show these challenges







"[The biggest personal challenge I faced in the last year was] coming to terms with not being able to see my mum because of drug addiction. Struggling with addiction myself. Having falling outs with close friends. Ending a toxic long-term relationship. Working through depression and crippling anxiety. Facing homelessness."

Female, 16-year-old, Victoria

"[The biggest personal challenge I faced in the last year was] financial freedom because money may not be the root to happiness, but it is definitely the root for survival. And growing up with a below average income family has made things tough..."

Male, 16-year-old, Tasmania

"The biggest personal challenge I faced in the last year was] being kicked out of home and issues with family violence with my father."

Gender diverse, 15-year-old, Tasmania

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"In our area there is hardly any accommodation. We try really hard to find other places for young people to stay using family mapping, talking to schools, or if they are older we can find some hotel accommodation … we just work day-by-day until we can secure something long-term. We never turn anyone away, but sometimes we have to talk to people about moving far away from the local area to find a place to live."

MA staff member, western regional NSW

"By the time we see young people who are homeless, there is so much trauma, so much pain.. We need help earlier, we need systems that can help earlier."

MA staff member, Hobart Tasmania

"Most of the young people we see are refuge-hopping because there's no way they can afford a home in Sydney."

MA staff member, inner west Sydney NSW

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Ending homelessness for young people will require a range of approaches to make sure that experiences of homelessness are rare, brief and non-recurring

Domains	Solution types
Permanent housing (for as long as people want or need it) with support as required	• Housing for people without support needs • Housing for people with support needs
Prevention measures for people at risk of homelessness	• **Universal** homelessness prevention measures to address societal drivers of homelessness • **Targeted** homelessness prevention measures for cohorts with elevated risk of homelessness • **Immediate** homelessness prevention measures for people at foreseeable or imminent risk of homelessness
Crisis responses for people experiencing homelessness	• Crisis and transitional housing • Wraparound support services

Based on the Homelessness Solutions Model Framework developed by Mission Australia and the Centre for Social Impact, UWA

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Prevention
Housing + Support
Crisis
Prevention
Housing +
Support
Crisis

Universal prevention: housing



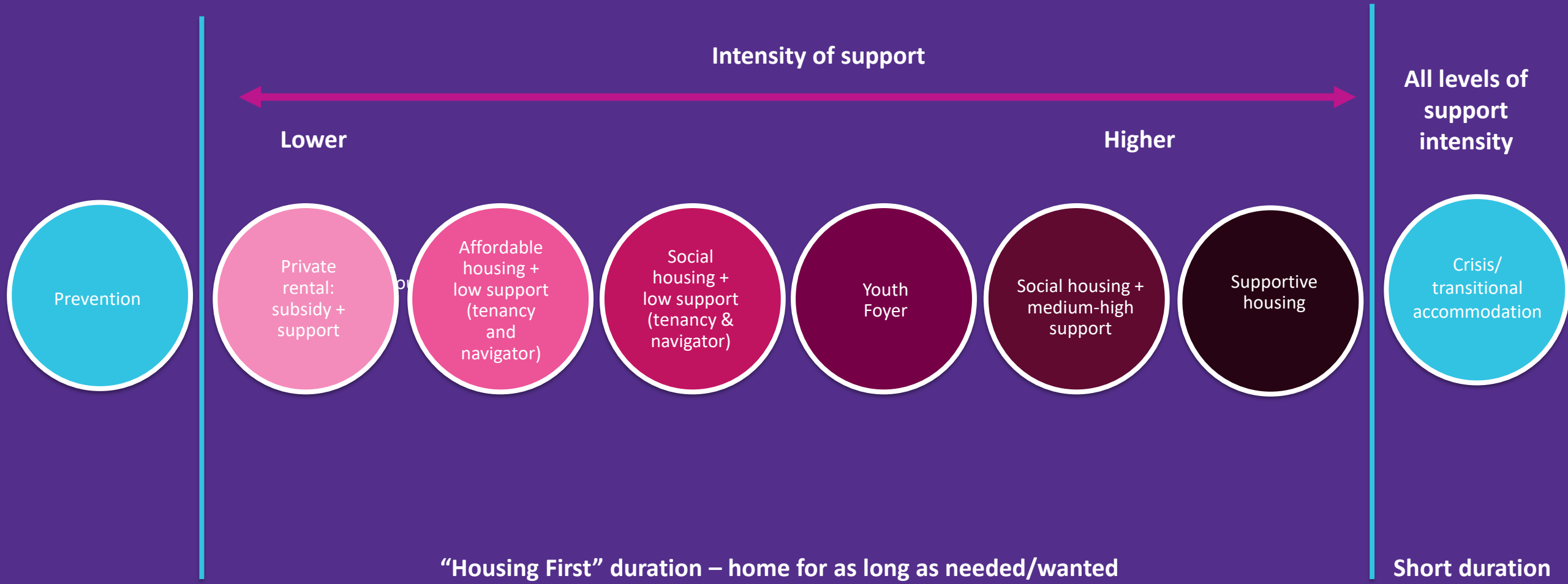
1 **Create more long-term housing plus support**

- Increase youth housing options in social housing and private rental, including:
  - Develop and maintain a national pool of at least 15,000 dedicated social housing youth tenancies
  - Construct ten 40-unit Youth Foyers over the next three years

Youth housing options

Based on the Homelessness Solutions Model Framework

Young people (16-24) need housing with support for different reasons and at different levels of intensity depending on need and circumstances.



Confidential

Universal prevention



2 **Implement universal homelessness prevention measures**

- Increase income support and improve rental subsidies
- End gender-based violence
- Ensure adequate funding for mental health care

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Targeted prevention

3 **Adopt further prevention measures for young people with elevated risks of homelessness**

- Instigate a $500 million Homelessness Prevention Transformation Fund, delivering targeted prevention programs and policy reform for groups of young people with elevated or immediate risk of homelessness
- Support at-risk families, through evidence-based early intervention support programs
- Keep at-risk young people engaged in education



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Immediate prevention



4 **Adopt further prevention measures for young people with immediate risks of homelessness**

- Rebuild family relationships and households if safe, including by expanding the Reconnect program
- Support youth tenancies through early intervention tenancy support programs

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High-quality crisis responses

5 **High-quality crisis responses**

- Ensure high-quality crisis support and accommodation responses for young people that are adequately-funded, person-centred and located according to demand



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Young people at the centre



6 **Put young people at the centre of homelessness responses**

- Recognise young people as a priority cohort in future national homelessness and housing strategies and funding agreements
- Integrate homelessness and other elements of the human services system at policy and service delivery levels
- Engage young people with lived experience of homelessness in the design and delivery of policy and programs