

MEDIA RELEASE

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BYS marks Homelessness Week as 4,500 young Queenslanders face homelessness every night

Brisbane Youth Service (BYS) is calling on the community to get involved and recognise **Homelessness Week 2019**, as more than 26,000 young people face homelessness in Australia every night.

Held from the **4-10 August**, Homelessness Week is a national event which raises awareness of people experiencing homelessness, the issues they are faced with and the action needed to achieve enduring solutions. This year's theme, **'housing ends homelessness'**, encourages all Australians to call on political leaders and decision makers to make the changes needed to end homelessness.

More than 116,000 Australians are experiencing homelessness and 195,000 are on social housing waiting lists. Despite an increased need, federal homelessness funding has remained static.

Brisbane Youth Service Acting CEO, Di Mahoney said together community members can drive change to help end homelessness and create better futures for young people.

"The main causes of homelessness are poverty, unaffordable rents and family violence and young people experiencing homelessness are often facing multiple, complex issues. We need homes that people can afford, as well as donations and support to provide long-term housing," Ms Mahoney said.

Over the past decade there has been a twenty-six per cent increase in youth homelessness in Australia, with around 4,500 young people experiencing homelessness in Queensland every night. The rate of overall homelessness in inner city Brisbane rose sixty-eight per cent between 2011 – 2016 from 1,735 to 2,915.

"At least fifty-one to fifty-four per cent of all young people seeking support from BYS are homeless, either sleeping rough, couch surfing, temporarily staying in a boarding house, in short-term accommodation, while around eighty per cent are in unsafe or unsuitable living accommodation," Ms Mahoney said.

"Over the last three years, the number of young people seeking support from BYS has steadily increased by seven per cent each year."

In the lead up to and during Homelessness Week 2019 individuals and organisations are encouraged to run their own social media campaigns to put the issue in the spotlight.

Help drive change and **join the conversation** by using the **#HW2019** across socials. Share your own and other's stories about homelessness and what needs to be done to fix it. For more information on Homelessness Week 2019 visit homelessnessaustralia.org.au or head to brisyouth.org.

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