



Mission Australia

The experiences of young people: How do their living arrangements impact?

Snapshot
2009



Macquarie Group
Foundation

Introduction

In 2008, over 45,000 young people aged 11 to 24 years participated in the seventh annual Mission Australia *National survey of young Australians*. 375 of them identified as homeless or living in insecure housing and a further 135 were living in foster care¹.

This publication:

- Provides an overview of youth homelessness and out-of-home care in Australia.
- Compares the survey responses of these two groups with young people in 'other' living arrangements.
- Profiles a service, Lemongrove Lodge, which is working effectively with homeless young people.
- Makes policy recommendations regarding young people who are homeless or in out-of-home care.

Homelessness and young people

Of the 105,000 people who are homeless in Australia on any night, nearly 45,000 are under 25 years of age and 22,000 are teenagers.

A homeless person is someone who does not have access to safe, secure and adequate housing. There are three levels of homelessness:

- *Primary* – people who may be living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings, or using cars or railway carriages for temporary shelter.
- *Secondary* – people who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another, for example, crisis accommodation, or staying with friends or other families ('couch-surfing').

- *Tertiary* – people who live in boarding houses on a medium to long-term basis. They are considered homeless because their accommodation is below the minimum community standard of a small self-contained flat (Chamberlain and MacKenzie, 2008).

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) has been the main Commonwealth and state/territory government response to homelessness. It provides transitional accommodation and related support services to homeless people with the aim of maximising their independence and self reliance. In 2007–08, 18% of SAAP clients were aged 15 to 19 years, the highest use by any age group. A further 15% were aged 20 to 24 years (AIHW, 2009b).

The reasons young people become homeless are diverse and complex. A study of homeless young people in Melbourne found the most commonly reported reason for leaving home was conflict with parents. Other reasons included anxiety or depression, desire for independence or adventure, violence at home, a traumatic family event, personal alcohol and drug abuse, physical abuse and trouble with the police (Rosenthal et al., 2006). Trauma (such as physical or sexual abuse or prolonged neglect) is a common experience amongst homeless youth prior to homelessness (Martijn and Sharpe, 2006).

The 'youth homelessness career' (see Figure 1, p.2) provides a way of understanding the phases and transitions young people typically follow when they first become homeless. Initially, they may make a tentative break from home, usually because of a breakdown of family relations, and 'couch-surf' with friends or extended family members. This is a critical time for early intervention where facilitation of family reconciliation is still possible (MacKenzie and Chamberlain,

Key highlights from national survey

- Homeless young people and those in out of home care are more likely than other young people to rely on government allowances as their major source of income.
- *Family relationships* and *friendships* are highly valued by all three groups but at lower proportions by those who are homeless or in out-of-home care. *Being independent* is much more highly valued by homeless young people than it is by the other groups.
- *Body image* is a significant concern for all three groups, especially those who are homeless. *Alcohol* is also a major concern for this group, as is *bullying/emotional abuse*. *Physical/sexual abuse* is a significant concern for those in out-of-home care.
- Young people who are homeless or in out-of-home care are more likely than those in 'other housing' to rely on *community agencies* and the *internet* for advice when they have a problem. These groups are also more likely not to have enough information on issues of concern.

¹ The survey asked respondents to select their living situation from a range of options. The focus of this paper is on those who selected 'homeless/insecure housing' or 'foster care'. The term 'out-of-home' care is used in this paper for those who indicated that they were living in 'foster care'.

2003). Without resources and support, these informal social networks typically break down and the young person becomes homeless (National Youth Commission Inquiry, 2008).

In most cases, young people leave home first and then leave school (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2003). This makes the 'homeless student' phase another critical time where early intervention can help prevent the transition to chronic homelessness. Once homeless, young people are at risk of becoming entrenched in the homeless population and subculture (Chamberlain et al., 2007).

Out-of-home care in Australia

Out-of-home care is accommodation and care provided to children and young people up to 18 years who are unable to live with their birth families, generally because they have been maltreated at home (Richardson et al., 2008). It is the responsibility of state and territory governments and care can be home-based (foster care, kinship care, or other home-based arrangements) or residential care. It can be arranged formally (through the statutory authorities or courts) or informally (without such intervention).

In 2008 there were over 30,000 children and young people living in out-of-home care in Australia (AIHW, 2009a). The number has risen by more than 115% in the past decade and this is attributed to a range of factors, including a 'stockpiling effect' as more children and young people enter out-of-home care than leave each year (AIHW, 2009a). Other factors that may explain the increase include a broader understanding of child abuse or neglect; a rise in the number of children needing protection; expanding community awareness of child protection issues; and changes in departmental policies and practices including mandatory reporting in some states (AIHW, 2009a).

Children and young people in out-of-home care often share a common history of domestic violence, substance abuse, physical violence and neglect in the family home (Osborn, 2006). A recent five year Australian study found that young people who had left care were: much less likely than other young people to have completed year 12; more likely to have experienced bullying at school; more likely to be living in transitional housing; more likely to be unemployed and have a lower weekly wage; more likely to experience limited social support and elevated risk of mental health issues; and less likely to believe they could achieve their goals (Cashmore and Paxman, 2006). Young people in out-of-home care are particularly vulnerable to homelessness: in a recent study of homeless school students nearly one in six had previously been in state care and protection (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2008).

National survey of young Australians

The 2008 *National survey* asked young Australians a range of questions including what they value, their concerns, where they turn for advice and who they admire. Demographic data was also collected (see Table 1, p.3).

Homeless respondents and those in out-of-home care were much more likely than those living in 'other housing' to identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (at least five times more likely). Other data show Indigenous young people are overrepresented in the homeless population in all states and territories (MacKenzie and Chamberlain, 2008) and the rate of Indigenous children and young people in out-of-home care is almost nine times the rate of other children (AIHW, 2009a).

Both groups were six to seven times more likely to rely on government allowances as their main income source compared to those in 'other housing'. Just over 62% of homeless respondents were participating in education, well below both the out-of-home care and 'other housing' figures.

What do young people value?

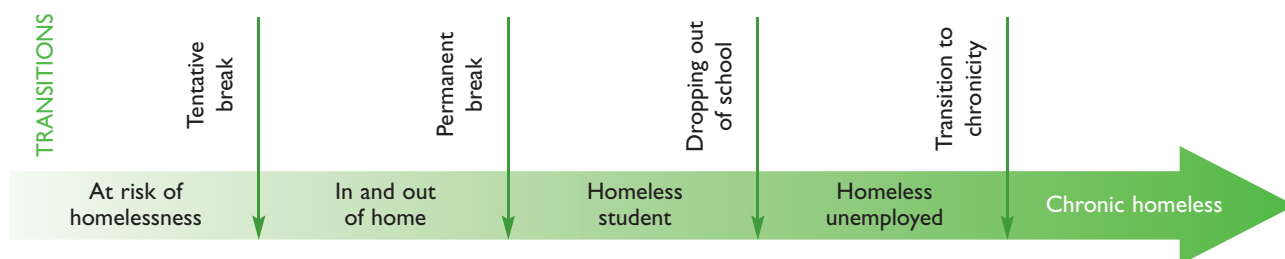
The survey asked young people to rank items they valued from a list of 10 options. The top three responses for young people in out-of-home care or 'other housing' were *family relationships*, *friendships* and *physical and mental health* (see Table 2, p.3). For those who were homeless, the top three were *family relationships*, *being independent* and *friendships*. The results for this group are consistent with previous Mission Australia surveys.

Whilst *family* was the top item for each group, it was highly valued by a greater proportion of those in 'other housing' than those in the other two groups (75.7% compared to around 60%). Family relationships can be particularly complex for young people who are homeless or in out-of-home care.

Respondents in 'other housing' were also more likely than both other groups to highly value *friendships*. The difference was most stark for homeless respondents, with just over a third, compared to around 63% of those in 'other housing', identifying *friendships* as important.

Being independent was highly valued by a greater proportion of homeless respondents than the other two groups (around half compared to about a third). *Feeling needed and valued* was also highly valued by more homeless respondents, with over a third, compared to around a quarter of those in 'other housing', identifying it as very important.

Figure 1: Homeless Youth Career



Source: Adapted from MacKenzie and Chamberlain (2003)

The *National Framework* is a 12 year strategic framework for reforming child protection across state, territory, and federal governments and non-government organisations. Its goal is that ‘Australia’s children and young people are safe and well’ and this objective is supported by six outcomes:

1. Children live in safe and supportive families and communities;
2. Children and families access adequate support to promote safety and intervene early;
3. Risk factors for child abuse and neglect are addressed;
4. Children who have been abused or neglected receive the support and care they need for their safety and wellbeing;
5. Indigenous children are supported and safe in their families and communities;
6. Child sexual abuse and exploitation is prevented and survivors receive adequate support (COAG, 2009, p.11).

Mission Australia makes the following recommendations, based on research such as the 2008 *National survey*, and our experience supporting homeless young people and those in care.

Healthy and stable relationships

Developing and sustaining connections with family and friends is a key foundation for young people’s wellbeing (Mission Australia, 2006). Young people who are homeless or in out-of-home care often lack connection and stability in significant relationships. The Commonwealth has recognised the importance of early intervention and working with young people to reconcile with their families by funding the *Reconnect* program. This is a valuable measure supported by Mission Australia.

However, the need for young people to (re-)build healthy relationships *after* they have become homeless is also critical. Specialist services working with young people need to be cognisant of, and funded for, providing services that help develop healthy and stable relationships. “Without ... new social networks to engage with, some people find it difficult to disengage from the homeless subculture when it is their primary social network... (this) can compromise their capacity to stay out of homelessness.” (Johnson and Chamberlain, 2008, p.578). (Re)building relationships is also important for young people in out-of-home-care as they are likely to have complex relationships with both their birth and nurturing families.

When young people come into contact with service providers, it may be that these formal relationships fill a gap left by disconnection from family and friends. This is suggested by the significant proportion of young people who were homeless or in foster care who identified community services as a major source of support. It is important young people experience continuity of positive relationships with these agencies. Agencies able to demonstrate a long-term commitment to supporting a young person can help rebuild trust and a platform for the development of healthy relationships.

Recommendation 1: Young people should be supported to develop and maintain healthy relationships, both as a measure to prevent homelessness and should they become homeless. This includes, where appropriate, providing continuity of positive relationships through services.

Recommendation 2: Young people in out-of-home-care should be supported to develop healthy relationships with their birth (where appropriate) and foster family to build a network of support that improves their wellbeing and assists them with the transition to independent living.

Support for homeless young people

The length and type of support available to homeless young people needs to be better tailored to their individual needs. Support should be holistic and integrated such as that provided by Lemongrove Lodge. Lemongrove allows young people to work on a range of issues simultaneously in the context of flexible and responsive case management.

Longer-term support will sometimes be necessary as it takes time for most people to rebuild their lives (Johnson and Chamberlain 2008, p.578). Without ongoing funding to support formerly homeless people to remain housed and supported, many will experience further episodes of homelessness. John’s story highlights the need for flexible support. He spent 18 months at Lemongrove and also received 12 months post-exit outreach support. The ongoing support allowed him to build a relationship with his uncle and develop skills for independent living.

The Commonwealth has recognised that some homeless people, particularly those with complex needs, will require longer-term and more intensive support (FaHCSIA, 2008). Young homeless people are particularly singled out in the White Paper as a group for whom specialist models that integrate long term accommodation and support are particularly beneficial.

Mission Australia supports the commitment to greater flexibility in service delivery and recommends that a range of options, including single- and dispersed-site Foyers, floating support schemes, youth ‘hubs’ and others, be considered for young homeless people.

Recommendation 3: Services should be supported and funded to deliver flexible, holistic support to young people based on their individual needs, recognising the timeframes required for sustainable change and the need for post-exit support.

Support for young people exiting care

Young people leaving care need to manage multiple transitions – moving into independent housing, finishing school, finding employment or further study and becoming financially independent – at younger ages and with fewer resources and supports than their peers (Johnson et al., 2009). *The Road Home* acknowledges that this group will require priority service provision. The ‘no exits into homelessness’ policy ... is not a ‘housing-only’ response: it will mean strengthening current post-release services so a person is connected to long-term (supported) housing, to education, training and employment assistance and, where required, family counselling. (FaHCSIA, 2008:27)

International evaluations of post-care support programs have generally been positive, although what form these should take needs to be informed by further research (Johnson et al., 2009).

Table 7: Achievement of goals

Goal domain	% achieved
Accommodation	89%
Activities of daily living	75%
Domestic violence	67%
Drug & alcohol support	100%
Education and training	100%
Employment	82%
Family	73%
Financial matters	96%
General	88%
Identification	96%
Legal issues	100%
Mental health	97%
Personal skills	80%
Physical health	81%
Relationships	50%
Spiritual health	100%
Support and intervention	75%

Planning for transition to independent living

Planning for independent living starts as soon as the young person enters Lemongrove. On leaving, they may go to:

- **Community housing:** Lemongrove works with a local provider so those exiting have access to accommodation for 12 months.
- **Immediate or extended family or friends.**
- **Public housing:** Priority housing is available for some but can involve lengthy waiting periods.
- **Private rental:** Rental costs are high in the area, so very few exit into private rental. Share housing can be a more affordable option.

Implications and recommendations

Preventing young people from becoming homeless or requiring out-of-home-care necessitates holistic responses from governments, non-government organisations, business and the community. Without a multi-level long term commitment, homeless youth and those in care are at risk of missing out on the connections, stability and support which are the foundations for adulthood.

In 2008, homelessness and young people in care became key policy foci for state and federal governments with the release of the Australian Government's *The Road Home* White Paper on homelessness and the Council of Australian Governments' *National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020*.

The Road Home focuses on three initiatives:

- **Turning off the tap:** services will intervene to prevent homelessness;

John*

John has been living out of home since he was 16. His parents separated after they lost their family home as a result of his mother's chronic gambling. John's father moved into a small flat with his children but John was unable to stay with them. There was not enough space and John frequently argued with his father and siblings. He went to a local crisis refuge and was referred to Lemongrove. When John arrived he was in Year 11, depressed and not coping at school. He often displayed aggressive behaviour, was estranged from his family, socially isolated and had limited life skills.

John stayed at Lemongrove for 18 months. He and his case manager worked on four main issues: employment; mental health; life skills; and family mediation. John decided to leave school in Year 11, and so his case manager worked with him and the local employment service provider to increase his skills and confidence, leading to John obtaining work as a labourer. He had treatment for depression as well as for other minor mental health issues. A lot of work was done to develop his life skills, particularly communication and conflict resolution. His case manager oversaw a family mediation between John, his father and siblings, which resulted in the development of ongoing positive relationships.

After leaving Lemongrove, he was offered a place in community housing for 12 months, where he thrived. He continued to receive case management and outreach services during this period to further develop his independent living skills. John's case manager assisted him to reconnect with his uncle, who lives locally. At the end of his stay in community housing, John moved in with his uncle where he remains living.

*Not his real name

- **Improving and expanding services:** services will be more connected and responsive to achieve sustainable housing, improve economic and social participation and end homelessness for their clients;
- **Breaking the cycle:** people who become homeless will move quickly through the specialist homelessness service system to stable housing with the support they need so that homelessness does not recur (FaHCSIA, 2008, p.14).

Table 1: Demographic data on respondents

	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing* %
Age			
11 – 14 years	37.8	49.5	50.3
15 – 19 years	54.2	50.5	47.5
20 – 24 years	8.0	0.0	2.2
Gender			
Male	41.0	53.4	56.9
Female	59.0	46.6	43.1
Indigenous status			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background	31.4	23.1	5.1
Main source of income			
Government allowance	23.9	20.0	3.4
Education and employment participation			
Studying (full time or part time)	62.2	80.0	74.8
Employed (casual, full time or part time)	49.3	40.0	53.2

* Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone.

Table 2: What young people value

	2008			2007	2006
	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing* %	Homeless %	Homeless %
Family relationships	60.2	60.9	75.7	57.9	51.0
Being independent	48.7	37.6	31.5	44.1	38.3
Friendships (other than family)	37.5	55.1	62.9	40.3	53.7
Feeling needed and valued	36.9	30.4	26.1	29.5	29.1
Physical and mental health	25.0	37.9	31.8	29.4	N/A
Getting a job	21.4	25.2	16.7	24.0	24.7
School or study satisfaction	19.1	16.8	21.1	18.1	18.4
Financial security	18.8	11.9	13.2	23.2	25.3
Spirituality/faith	15.7	14.6	13.9	18.4	16.4
Making a difference in the community	13.1	11.2	7.7	N/A	N/A

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked 1, 2 or 3 by respondents. *Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone.

Issues of concern

Young people were asked to rank their concerns from a list of 15 options provided (see Table 3, p.4). There were a number of differences between the groups, with *body image* the only issue in the top three identified by each. For homeless respondents it was a standout issue, with just over two in five compared to just under 30% of those in ‘other housing’ or out-of-home care indicating it was a major concern. This is consistent with the 2006 and 2007 surveys.

For homeless respondents, the second and third issues of concern were *alcohol* and *bullying/emotional abuse*. About a third of this group identified each as major concerns, while those in out-of-home care or ‘other housing’ were much less likely to identify either (between 20% and 25%).

The top concern for those in out-of-home care was *physical/sexual abuse* with nearly a third (31.0%) identifying it as a major issue, much higher than their homeless counterparts (14.5%) or those in ‘other housing’ (22.7%). The second and third issues for those in out-of-home care were *body image* and *suicide* respectively, with similar proportions (around a quarter) to those in ‘other housing’ identifying them as major concerns.

Those in out-of-home care or ‘other housing’ were more likely than those who were homeless to identify *coping with stress* and *depression* as major concerns. One in ten homeless respondents, compared to one in five in both other groups identified *depression* as a significant concern.

Table 3: Issues of concern

	2008			2007	2006
	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing* %	Homeless %	Homeless %
Body image	41.5	29.9	26.0	39.6	38.6
Alcohol	35.0	24.4	20.5	40.9	43.8**
Bullying/emotional abuse	31.7	22.0	22.3	26.4	28.7
Drugs	23.5	22.2	26.1	23.2	43.8**
Suicide	22.9	25.8	24.6	27.0	31.7
The environment	20.1	16.0	18.4	19.4	N/A
Family conflict	18.7	19.7	26.1	18.0	22.4
Self harm	17.6	16.7	13.7	11.8	23.6
Sexuality (relationships, health, identity)	17.1	15.3	12.0	21.6	20.3
Coping with stress	15.6	24.2	20.5	16.0	20.8
Physical/sexual abuse	14.5	31.0	22.7	16.3	22.9
Personal safety	14.4	18.9	23.1	N/A	N/A
Depression	12.7	22.2	17.9	14.2	22.8
School or study problems	12.2	16.7	18.7	12.4	12.8
Discrimination	10.6	13.3	12.6	13.6	14.7

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked 1, 2 or 3 by respondents. *Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone. **In 2006 drugs and alcohol were listed as a single item.

Advice and support

Respondents were asked to rank their sources of advice when they had a personal problem from a list of 10 options. The top responses for those in out-of-home care and 'other housing' were the same, namely *friends*, *parents* and *relative/family friend*, although a smaller proportion of those in out-of-home care identified each as significant (see Table 4).

The top source of advice for homeless young people was also *friends*, but their second and third responses were *community agencies* and the *internet* respectively. Over 45% of this group identified *community agencies* as a major

source of advice, as did a quarter of those in out-of-home care but only 10% of those in 'other housing'. Two in five (40.7%) homeless respondents identified the *internet* as a major source of advice, as did 31.0% of those in out-of-home care and 19.8% of those in 'other housing'.

Only around a third (35.5%) of the homeless group identified *parents* as an important source of support, compared to around a half of those in out-of-home care and three quarters in 'other housing'. Similarly only 30% of homeless respondents indicated a *relative/family friend* was a major source of advice, compared to 62% of those in 'other housing'.

Table 4: Where young people turn for advice and support

	2008			2007	2006
	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing* %	Homeless %	Homeless %
Friend/s	72.9	76.7	85.4	74.4	71.2
Community agencies eg youth worker	45.1	25.0	10.4	37.1	33.3
Internet	40.7	31.0	19.8	47.3	36.6
Parent/s	35.5	52.4	74.9	38.6	43.1
Relative/family friend	30.1	43.8	61.6	32.4	39.2
Magazines	20.4	17.1	11.0	24.2	26.9
Someone else in your community eg doctor, church minister	18.3	11.3	8.4	10.8	11.1
School counsellor	15.3	15.1	11.4	12.9	17.4
Telephone helpline	13.8	16.9	5.7	14.2	16.2
Teacher	8.0	9.8	11.4	11.1	8.3

Note: Data is aggregated and includes items ranked 1, 2 or 3 by respondents. *Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone.

Having enough information on issues

Homeless respondents were much more likely than those in 'other accommodation' to indicate they did not have enough information on issues of concern (see Table 5, 34.7% compared to 15.8%). A quarter of the out-of-home care group also did not have enough information.

A small number of homeless respondents indicated what topics they wanted more information on and this included (in order of frequency): sexuality and sex education; alcohol and drugs; sexual abuse; global issues including terrorism, war and politics; emotional abuse; body image; and depression. Out-of-home care respondents indicated they wanted more information on sexuality and sex education; sexual abuse; depression; suicide and self harm; alcohol and drugs; and school and study.

Table 5: Access to enough information

	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing %*
Enough information	65.3	72.7	84.2
Not enough information	34.7	27.3	15.8

* Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone.

Who do young people admire?

Young people were asked to identify three people or organisations they most admired. As shown in Table 6, *family* and *friends* were the top two responses for each group, although the proportions and ranks varied. Just under a quarter of homeless young people and those living in out-of-home care identified *friends*, compared with 17.5% of those in 'other housing'. Close to 30% of those in out-of-home care or 'other housing' identified *family*, compared with only 12% of homeless young people.

Table 6: People and organisations young people admire

	2008			2007	2006
	Homeless %	Out-of-home care %	Other housing* %	Homeless %	Homeless %
Friends	24.5	23.7	17.5	18.0	15.1
Family	12.0	29.3	30.5	12.2	15.1
Entertainers	11.0	6.7	6.1	16.8	20.2
Businesses and business people	10.2	2.8	2.3	7.2	-
Sports teams, players and coaches	6.1	7.4	6.7	8.7	13.0
Community agencies	4.1	3.5	4.9	4.8	5.0
Myself	3.6	1.1	0.7	2.5	-
Schools and their staff	3.2	3.9	2.7	1.3	-
Religious figures	2.9	1.8	2.1	2.5	6.7
Political organisations and figures	2.9	1.1	1.4	5.4	-

* Refers to those living with family, in a share house, at boarding school or living alone.

Lemongrove Lodge

Lemongrove Lodge is a supported accommodation service in western Sydney providing long-term housing for young people aged 16 to 21 who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. It offers accommodation and case management over a 12 to 18 month period and provides outreach for a period of 6 to 12 months for clients who have left the service. It can house six young people at any one time, in a share-house environment with private bedrooms and communal spaces for cooking and recreation. Residents participate in household duties and make agreements about issues such as drug use and curfews.

There is a focus on developing supportive informal networks and staff build relationships with the young people to ensure that better outcomes are achieved, and they continue to seek assistance if required, after they exit the service.

Addressing a range of needs

Through case management a broad range of issues across 17 domains are addressed. Outcomes data for 2007/08 (Table 7, p.6) shows that 85% of goals were fully achieved. The primary goals are typically:

- *Engagement in employment, education and/or training:* By the time young people leave they are expected to be engaged in work or study.
- *Reconnecting with family and other networks:* Some young people will return to their family home after being at Lemongrove, but it may be more appropriate to help them create stronger ties with extended family or other social support networks.
- *Development of independent living skills:* Through a life skills program, skills in budgeting, cooking, cleaning, hygiene, problem solving and effective communication are developed.

The case manager works both day and evening shifts, so they are available to speak with the young people at times when they are more likely to be around. The case manager also takes a role in running the household, allowing them to see young people's goals and planning 'in action', and to help them problem solve as issues arise.

Recommendation 4: That further research be conducted into appropriate forms of post-care support, and that new programs for young people leaving care are based on available evidence, best practice models and include an evaluation strategy.

Access to information

Given the high proportion of homeless young people and those in out-of-home care who do not have enough information on issues of concern, current information provision for these groups appears to be inadequate. Community agencies and the internet were key sources of advice for these groups. Governments and service providers have a responsibility to ensure good quality information to these young people via the means they are most likely to access. Access to quality information, including services available, may assist young people to address their issues before they lead to homelessness. Targeted research with both these groups is required to provide more detailed insights on the areas they would like further information on and the most useful ways for them to access it.

Recommendation 5: Young people should be provided with high quality information on issues of concern via the medium they are most likely to use.

Recommendation 6: Targeted research should be undertaken to gain deeper insights on the information needs of homeless young people and those in out-of-home care.

Support and training for foster carers

The increasing number of children and young people in care means that demand for foster carers is high. It is important to recruit carers best able to meet the needs of those who are likely to have experienced significant challenges in their lives. Providing carers with ongoing training and support to assist in preventing placement breakdown and retaining foster carers is critical (AIFS, 2005).

Recommendation 7: That increased assessment, training and ongoing support be given to foster carers to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people in care.

References

Australian Institute of Family Studies (2005) *Out-of-home care in Australia: Messages from research*, Melbourne, AIFS.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2009a) *Child protection Australia 2007–08*, Canberra, AIHW.

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2009b) *Homeless people in SAAP: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2007–08*, Canberra, AIHW.

Cashmore, J. and Paxman, M. (2006) 'Wards leaving care: Follow up five years on'. *Children Australia*, 31.

Chamberlain, C., et al. (2007) *Homelessness in Melbourne: Confronting the challenge*, Melbourne, RMIT University.

Chamberlain, C. and MacKenzie, D. (2008) *Counting the Homeless 2006*, Canberra, Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Council of Australian Governments (2009) *Protecting children is everyone's business: National framework for protecting Australia's children 2009-2020*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of Families, Housing Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2008) *The road home: A national approach to reducing homelessness*, Canberra, Commonwealth of Australia.

Johnson, G. and Chamberlain, C. (2008) 'From Youth to Adult Homelessness'. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 43, 563-582.

Johnson, G., et al. (2009) *Improving housing outcomes for young people leaving state out of home care*, Melbourne, AHURI, RMIT Research Centre.

MacKenzie, D. and Chamberlain, C. (2003) *Homeless careers: Pathways in and out of homelessness*, Melbourne, Swinburne University and RMIT.

MacKenzie, D. and Chamberlain, C. (2008) 'Youth Homelessness 2006'. *Youth Studies Australia*, 27:1, pp.17-25.

Martijn, C. and Sharpe, L. (2006) 'Pathways to youth homelessness'. *Social Science & Medicine*, 62, 1-12.

Mission Australia (2006) *Youth employment strategy*, Sydney, Mission Australia.

National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Homelessness (2008) *Australia's homeless youth*, Brunswick, National Youth Commission.

Osborn, A. (2006) A national profile and review of services and interventions for children and young people with high support needs in Australian out-of-home care. School of Psychology, Adelaide, University of Adelaide.

Richardson, N., Irenyi, M. and Kelleher, J. (2008) *Resource sheet: Foster care*, Canberra, National Child Protection Clearinghouse, AIFS.

Rosenthal, D., et al. (2006) 'Why do homeless young people leave home?' *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 30, pp.281-285.

*Inspired by Jesus Christ, Mission Australia exists to meet human need and to spread the knowledge of the love of God.
Our vision is to see a fairer Australia by enabling people in need to find pathways to a better life.*



Macquarie Group
Foundation

The Macquarie Group is a diversified international provider of banking, financial, advisory and investment services. Through the Macquarie Group Foundation, Macquarie supports a wide range of community organisations. The Foundation has formed a major partnership with Mission Australia, to enhance its research into key social issues. This research guides Mission Australia's policy development and advocacy, ensuring its employment programs and community services continue to deliver to those most in need.

For more information contact:

Anne Hampshire, National Manager,
Research and Social Policy, Mission Australia
Telephone: (02) 9219 2000
Facsimile: (02) 9264 3713
Website: www.missionaustralia.com.au
© Mission Australia 2009