

NSW
Homelessness
Strategy
2025–2035

Appendix 3:
Evidence
summary

August 2025

Introduction

This appendix outlines the evidence behind the vision, outcomes, principles and focus areas of the NSW Homelessness Strategy 2025-2035.

Our vision:
Homelessness in NSW is rare, brief and not repeated because people have a safe home and the support to keep it.



Rare:

People can get and keep a safe, accessible and affordable home

People know where to get information and support to prevent homelessness

People at risk of homelessness are identified early and linked with the right supports



Brief:

People's needs are quickly identified, and they are referred to the right supports

People get safe crisis accommodation with appropriate support when they need it

People are supported out of homelessness into longer-term housing with tailored supports



Not repeated:

People with complex needs can access comprehensive, longer-term support so they do not experience repeat homelessness

People have strong connections to their community that protect against repeat homelessness

People's housing meets their changing needs across their lifespan



Shifting the system from:

Crisis focus → **Prevention**

Service centred → **Person centred**

Central delivery → **Local delivery**

Guided by these principles:

Housing is a human right

Aboriginal expertise and leadership are respected

People with lived experience inform service design

Person-centred principles are embedded in policy and practice

Prevention is prioritised

Housing First principles are embedded in policy and practice

Service planning and delivery is flexible, local and joined up

The workforce is strong and capable

Systems, tools and measurement are consistent and fit for purpose

Vision and goals: Why ‘rare, brief and not repeated’?

The Strategy’s vision is based on the SHARE Framework to end homelessness developed by the UK Centre for Homelessness Impact.¹

SHARE provides a structured approach and common goals of making homelessness ‘rare’, ‘brief’ and ‘non-recurrent’. It is an evidence-based tool that anyone working in and around homelessness can use to frame discussions and direct efforts towards the ultimate goal of ending homelessness. It is aligning efforts internationally and has also been adopted by a number of Australian State and Territory governments, peak bodies, housing providers and homelessness services.²

SHARE is intended to be applied alongside a wider approach that draws on bodies of knowledge, rigorous evaluation of ‘what works’, and the unique experiences of those using it, so we have adapted the Framework to fit the NSW context.

This Strategy sets out new directions to build the capacity of the NSW service system to prevent and respond to homelessness, and provides principles to guide policy, practice, investment and resource allocation over the next ten years.

Homelessness is rare

Outcome 1 – Wherever possible, homelessness is prevented from happening in the first place, making it rare

The table below summarises the rationale and evidence for the strategic objectives aimed at making homelessness rare.

Outcome	Rationale
1.1 People can get and keep a safe, accessible and affordable home	<p>The extremely low vacancy rate in NSW (~1 per cent) and increasing lack of affordable rental properties means that the private rental market is largely unaffordable for people reliant on income support payments and low-income households.³ Financial support to sustain tenancies in the private rental market can improve access to established housing facilities, presents a scaling opportunity for existing programs and can reduce the burden on the homelessness system.⁴</p> <p>There is a significant amount of research on the need for more social and affordable housing. The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) (2023) found: ‘determining just what is the right level of social housing in a healthy housing system is complex. While the 2021 Census recorded there were almost 350,000 social housing dwellings across Australia (just shy of 4% of the number of all households), at the end of June 2021 there were another almost 165,000 applicants on the waiting lists for public housing, more than 40,000 applicants for community housing and just over 12,000 applicants for State owned and managed Indigenous housing. If we add together all the households on the waiting list and those already in social housing, we find that over half a million (close to 565,000, or just over 6 per cent) Australian households were living in, or had requested to live in, a form of social housing. AHURI has projected growth in demand for social housing to the year 2037, estimating that over 1.1 million social dwellings will be needed by that point.’⁵</p> <p>The person-centred and creative use of brokerage funding has been evidenced as a key mechanism in preventing homelessness and delivering housing outcomes that otherwise would not be possible. This includes for advance rent payments and purchase of household items.⁶</p>
1.2 People know where to get information and support to prevent homelessness	<p>Improved information about and access to appropriate support, at the right time, is critical for effective prevention of homelessness. There remains significant stigma about experiences of housing instability and many people are often hesitant to reach out for support. Community-based linker programs, such as the US-based Homebase, have been evaluated and shown to be effective at preventing homelessness from occurring.⁷</p> <p>Further, prevention initiatives must consider the social and cultural factors that affect people’s ability to access and understand important information to address the drivers of homelessness. Cultural competency training is a key area for improvement for the workforce to achieve greater cultural appropriateness and safety.⁸</p>

Outcome

Rationale

1.3 People at risk of homelessness are identified early and linked with the right supports

Some cohorts of people are at greater risk of homelessness than others. The evidence for best practice prevention and early intervention indicates the need for targeted, person-centred approaches to identify and address the risk factors for each of these cohorts.⁹

Evidence also suggests that high-risk cohorts often present with challenges to education, health and criminal justice sectors before they present to housing and homelessness services. This points to the need for greater collaboration between government services and capability uplift within mainstream services to support early identification.^{10 11}

Investing in primary prevention for young people produces greater benefits over their lifetime including increased potential lifetime earnings associated with greater school attendance. There is some emerging evidence for the effectiveness of universal screening programs in improving housing stability and lifetime outcomes for young people. Evaluations of pilot programs demonstrate an up to 40 per cent decrease in young people aged 12-18 entering Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS), although levels of effectiveness vary.¹²

People leaving government services

People leaving government facilities are often at the highest risk of experiencing homelessness. For example:

- More than half of people preparing to leave prison expected to be homeless and, of that, 44 per cent expected to sleep in short-term or emergency accommodation.¹³
- People exiting mental health facilities face significant challenges securing and sustaining stable and/or long-term housing.¹⁴
- 54 per cent of out of home care (OOHC) leavers access homelessness services in the four years after exit, and experience high levels of repeat use of SHS, particularly for Indigenous care leavers.¹⁵

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to address the risk of exiting into homelessness from state institutions, including hospitals, mental health facilities, correctional institutions and out-of-home-care, including developing a nationally consistent approach to discharge planning and a national definition of 'no exit into homelessness'.¹⁶ It also recommended that the Australian Government should work with state and territory governments to better integrate housing and mental health support services.¹⁷

Young people

Programs such as *Kids Under Cover* in Victoria are successful early intervention and prevention models that disrupt the spiral of homelessness for young people through the provision of a studio in the backyard of a family or carer's home to house young people safely and with their own space, without losing the connection with family.¹⁸ In 2021/22 631 studios were on the ground providing accommodation to 959 young people who would have otherwise been homeless.¹⁹ The program also provides scholarships and other support.

The evidence base identifies proven approaches to diverting these cohorts from homelessness through the provision of wraparound psychosocial supports, long-term case management, and collaborative in-reach models. For example:

- A 2023 evaluation of the Reintegration Housing Support Program found that the provision of wraparound psychosocial supports was effective in achieving long-term public housing outcomes for people exiting prison at-risk of homelessness.²⁰
- There is also some evidence that offender re-entry programs offering case management to prisoners before and after their release from prison may improve protective factors for homelessness including greater residential stability, employment and social support and reductions in recidivism.²¹

Findings from a 2020 evaluation of Premier's Youth Initiative (PYI) indicated that young people with a history of prior SHS who did not receive PYI services were 182 per cent more likely to become homeless after age 18 than young people who did not have a prior SHS history and did not receive PYI.²² Expansion of programs like PYI and integration with other youth services can play a significant role in the diversion of young people exiting care from the homelessness system.

People experiencing domestic and family violence

Domestic and family violence (DFV) is the single biggest cause of people seeking support from Specialist Homelessness Services in Australia.²³

A Spinney (2012) noted that the traditional approach by judicial systems across Australia has been to remove women and children from their home and situations of domestic violence. This approach can lead to homelessness, disruption of children's schooling, and family and community connections.²⁴

In NSW, the Staying Home, Leaving Violence program aims to prevent women and children experiencing DFV from becoming homeless or move away from their support system. It works in cooperation with NSW Police remove the perpetrator from the family home so that the woman and children can stay safely where they are.²⁵

Evaluations of Staying Home, Leaving Violence found the program is successful in preventing women from becoming homeless and relies upon intensive case management, service integration and community awareness.²⁶

Homelessness is brief

Outcome 2 – When homelessness does occur, people are quickly connected to housing and the supports they need

The table below summarises the rationale and evidence for the strategic objectives aimed at making homelessness brief.

Outcome	Rationale
2.1 People’s needs are quickly identified, and they are referred to the right support	<p>Streamlined access to services and supports is important to minimise the time that people experience homelessness. By funding multidisciplinary triage and support teams and local coordination groups, people can access the help they need to navigate a complex service system. Triage tools are designed to quickly assess the health and social service needs of rough sleepers and match them with appropriate support and housing interventions.²⁷</p> <p>By Name List:</p> <p>A By Name List (BNL) is a comprehensive list of every person in a community experiencing homelessness, updated in real time. Using information collected and shared with their consent, each person on the list has a file that includes their name, homeless history, health, and housing needs. Maintaining a BNL allows communities to track the ever-changing size and composition of their homeless population. They know current and detailed information on every homeless person in each subpopulation.²⁸</p> <p>A BNL or equivalent is a coordination tool that facilitates a localised approach to end homelessness. It can provide a near to real-time database system to improve understanding of homelessness, and the way in which people may come to experience homelessness. It tracks people’s movements in and out of homelessness which collectively informs understanding of the pathways into and out of homelessness. This understanding enables better development of responses to address these pathways and work towards ending homelessness.²⁹</p> <p>A BNL can be used by services or communities to prioritise the most vulnerable people in an area. It can also capture which services are engaged with the person and who the lead service is for an individual or family. Agencies can use a BNL to pool the available housing options and collectively decide collectively who is most in need and most appropriate for available housing options.³⁰</p> <p>A BNL is generally community owned and led, which encourages collective ownership of the results within the community. It allows services to test and amend supports and understand if they improve outcomes for clients in real time.³¹</p> <p>The goal is not simply data collection, but to make sure each person registered on the BNL gets connected to housing, or to prevent people from the need to be registered in the first place.³²</p> <p>People can choose and provide consent to make their information available to all or some services to prevent them having to retell their stories. The availability of this information makes it easier for service providers to understand a person’s needs and collaborate to provide a person-centred response.</p>

Outcome	Rationale
<p>2.2 People get safe crisis accommodation with appropriate support when they need it</p>	<p>Timely and quality accommodation support is critical for people in crisis and a variety of housing support options are required to accommodate demand. Capital investment is needed to purchase, maintain and upgrade housing including transitioning housing stock to support fluctuations in need.³⁴</p> <p>Temporary accommodation</p> <p>Wilkins and Gray found that provision of temporary accommodation (TA) in the United Kingdom (UK) did not constitute value for money and or meet the needs of the increasingly complex people who access it.³⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the £2.29 billion of public money spent on temporary accommodation in 2023-24, £700 million went on Bed and Breakfasts and hotels. While such accommodation ‘does perform an essential role in an emergency, local authorities also acknowledge that it can be highly unsuitable to people’s needs. This is due to overcrowding, use of shared facilities, lack of support, restricted opportunities for children, and potential safety concerns’.³⁶ • The report recommended establishing quality standards for TA, reviewing funding streams, improving data collection, properly planning for TA and undertaking targeted interventions to reduce the inflow and drive the move out form TA.³⁷ <p>Young people</p> <p>YFoundations has highlighted that ‘[w]here adequately resourced and implemented, there is significant potential for supported temporary accommodation to act as an entry point for young people into a more effective, coordinated and systemic response to addressing their homelessness. As the core focus of the support provided would be on connecting the young person to the services they require and moving them as quickly as possible to the accommodation or housing solution best suited to their needs, the reform of temporary accommodation must be accompanied with increased investments in age-appropriate models of crisis, transitional and medium-term housing’.³⁸</p>
<p>2.3 People move out of homelessness into longer-term housing with tailored supports</p>	<p>Young people</p> <p>A broader system reform away from a program-oriented approach to a localised cross-sectoral framework for support and service delivery will benefit all cohorts including young people who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. Systematic implementation of a localised community approach to early intervention within a strong data-driven outcomes framework will support the flow of young people out of homelessness.³⁹</p> <p>A systemic review of effective practices to reduce homelessness and disadvantage found that, from the perspective of young people, the most important aspects were positive and supportive relationships between young people and support workers; youth-centred programs that support positive youth development; integrated and multidisciplinary service delivery; and flexible and ongoing support beyond housing; and strengths and resilience based therapeutic approaches.⁴⁰</p> <p>Valentine et al found the challenges of family homelessness ‘highlight the need for integrated housing and non-housing support...while there is consensus that homelessness is driven by both structural and individual factors, and that responses need to address both, the homelessness system is too narrowly defined to incorporate these drivers. Options for policy development include redesigning the homelessness service system to include long-term housing providers, and to include assessment of the impact of health and justice systems on housing outcomes’.⁴¹</p>

Outcome	Rationale
	<p>Housing First</p>
	<p>Programs that incorporate Housing First principles provide access to permanent, supported housing without any preconditions (e.g. no requirement to be 'housing ready' or substance free).⁴² Research identifies this as best practice to support people experiencing chronic homelessness and/or with high and complex needs to achieve housing stability.⁴³ It is also successful in enabling access to services and improving some non-housing outcomes such as mental health, health and justice outcomes. Though most evidence is based on programs targeted towards chronic homelessness, emerging programs and evidence show effectiveness for other cohorts.</p>
	<p>The effectiveness of programs that adopt Housing First principles is attributed to the provision of housing, length of support and intensity of support which provides stability for those experiencing homelessness to address other support needs. For example, 74 per cent of clients housed by the Together Home Program (THP) sustained their tenancies.⁴⁴</p>
	<p>Programs that adopt Housing First principles are increasingly used for cohorts of people who are experiencing homelessness but may not have been rough sleepers or have complex needs. Whilst pathways into homelessness are complex and varied, the effectiveness of tailored support and stable housing indicates that the Housing First philosophy and principles would be appropriate for Aboriginal people, young people, women and families. For example, a third of THP clients identify as Aboriginal.⁴⁵ Early findings from the THP Aboriginal-Led Model operating in the Central Coast indicate that the delivery of culturally appropriate services is critical for the success of programs that adopt Housing First principles in Australia.⁴⁶</p>
	<p>Closing the Gap clearly defines the importance of service delivery by Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.</p>

Homelessness is not repeated

Outcome 3 – When homelessness does occur, people do not experience multiple episodes of homelessness

The table below summarises the rationale and evidence for the strategic objectives aimed at making homelessness not repeated.

Outcome	Rationale
3.1 People with complex needs can access comprehensive, longer-term support so they do not experience repeat homelessness	Brackertz et al (2020) considered the interplay between housing and mental health pathways and found that to be effective ‘policy responses should strive for integration across the housing and mental health systems; increase the use of health and mental health services by people experiencing mental ill-health and implement authentic person-centred approaches that integrate mental health, physical health and social support across the life course’. ⁴⁷ Treating homelessness as a combined health and social issue ‘is critical to improving the abysmal health outcomes of people experiencing homelessness. In addition, the enormous economic costs of hospital care for people who are homeless can be reduced when housing and other social determinants are taken into account’. ⁴⁸
	Housing First models such as Common Ground have a high effectiveness in supporting people with complex needs to access and sustain housing. A 2015 evaluation of Common Ground in Camperdown found that 63 per cent of formerly homeless clients remained housed in Common Ground for at least 28 months. ⁴⁹
	Evaluations of programs to support people living in social housing to sustain their tenancies, such as the Sustaining Tenancies in Social Housing (STSH) program, indicate that 98 per cent of clients remain in their tenancy at the end of the support period. ⁵⁰ Evaluation data suggests that negative exits from social housing decreased by up 25 per cent because of STSH efforts. ⁵¹
	Across the literature, cross-sectoral collaboration and integration is identified as a critical component of effective service provision for these at-risk cohorts. ^{52 53} Long-term collaborative case management is important to effectively respond to their often multiple and complex needs. For example, the Home and Healthy in-reach and assertive outreach models were effective in creating synergies between NSW Health and service provider staff to allow vulnerable people in health settings to be quickly intercepted and diverted from homelessness. ⁵⁴
	Assertive outreach
	Assertive outreach is the dominant model used to engage people sleeping rough in Australia, the UK, United States and Canada. While there is limited rigorous evidence on its effectiveness, there are a small number of low rigour studies that can offer useful insights about this model. A 2023 mixed methods evaluation of the assertive outreach pilot in Newcastle and Tweed Heads between September 2019 and June 2023 showed that the model was effective in improving the likelihood that clients were placed in social housing within the follow-up period. ⁵⁵

Outcome	Rationale
<p>3.2 People have strong connections to their community that protect against repeat homelessness</p>	<p>Plett et al (2024) found that ‘poverty influences one’s ability to participate in meaningful activity following homelessness and, in turn, their opportunities for belonging in their communities. Being limited in this way prevents one from building social capital that can support thriving following homelessness...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engaging in meaningful activities was a facilitator in developing a sense of belonging. There were three ways in which participants experienced belonging: through spending time with others who care, engaging in activities that help individuals feel like they are part of society, and interacting with the surrounding living world, such as pets and nature - Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers should recognize the critical importance of belonging in supporting thriving and preventing ongoing homelessness in future research, and the ways in which contextual factors mitigate this experience.⁵⁶
<p>3.3 People’s access to housing meets their changing needs across their lifespan</p>	<p>See Appendix 1 – Respecting and responding to the diversity of homelessness experiences</p> <p>For evidence related to the diverse needs of children and young people see Summary of evidence on actions to address homelessness amongst children and young people (in the final tables below).</p> <p>The Ageing on the Edge Forum highlights that ‘housing is critically important for physical and mental health, and general wellbeing of older people. With a decline in home ownership at retirement age, unprecedented increases in housing prices and a reduction in social and affordable housing stock in NSW, older people are experiencing significant housing challenges and are at increased risk of homelessness.’⁵⁷ An early intervention and preventative approach is critical to reaching older people before they experience a housing crisis in order to avoid the associated mental and physical health impacts of homelessness.⁵⁸</p>

Guiding principles of the Strategy

These principles guide all areas of the NSW Homelessness Strategy:

- Housing is a human right
- Prevention is prioritised
- Housing First principles are embedded in policy and practice
- The workforce is strong and capable
- Aboriginal expertise and leadership are respected
- People with lived experience inform service design
- Person-centred principles are embedded in policy and practice
- Service planning and delivery is flexible, localised and joined up
- Systems, tools and measurement are consistent, accessible and fit for purpose

Housing is a human right

- Adequate housing was recognised as part of the right to an adequate standard of living in article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁵⁹
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that everyone has a right to adequate housing.⁶⁰ Adequate housing includes security of tenure and access to services.
- 'Housing is the basis of stability and security for an individual or family. The centre of our social, emotional and sometimes economic lives, a home should be a sanctuary—a place to live in peace, security and dignity'.⁶¹
- As noted by the Australian Human Rights Commission, 'a person who is homeless may face violations of the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to education, the right to liberty and security of the person, the right to privacy, the right to social security, the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to vote, and many more. These human rights are protected by a number of international human rights treaties'.⁶²
- A human rights approach to homelessness recognises that people experiencing homelessness are entitled to protection under international law and are not just recipients of charity. A human rights approach also calls for the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience of homelessness in developing solutions.⁶³
- See **Appendix 2 – Why is change needed?** for evidence on the impacts of homelessness on people, such as poor health outcomes, trauma, violence and premature death.

Prevention is prioritised

- Homelessness prevention refers to policies, practices, and interventions that reduce the likelihood that someone will experience homelessness and assisting those who have been homeless to reduce the risk of the recurrence of homelessness.⁶⁴ Gaetz and Dej argue that homelessness prevention must include interventions targeted at individuals and broader structural reforms directed at addressing the drivers of homelessness such as poverty, lack of affordable housing and family and domestic violence.⁶⁵
- Fitzpatrick et al (2021) propose 5 types of homelessness prevention that are needed – universal, upstream, crisis, emergency and repeat. They found that universal prevention (e.g. affordable housing and poverty reduction), and upstream preventative interventions (focused on high-risk groups) have been deficient to date.⁶⁶
- Flatau et al (2021) identified prevention as one of five key actions to end homelessness in Australia, highlighting targeted prevention and early intervention programs which address the underlying drivers of homelessness in order to turn off the tap of entry into homelessness.⁶⁷
- The Productivity Commission's review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement recommended that the Australian, State and Territory Governments establish a separate pool of funding for prevention and early intervention programs to address the causes of homelessness for the main 'at risk' cohorts, including but not limited to people leaving health and correctional facilities and care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people and people needing support to maintain their tenancy.⁶⁸

- Mackie (2023) believes ‘effective universal prevention must be the foundation of any strategy to end homelessness. However, there is also an urgent need to reorient homelessness responses toward upstream and crisis prevention, and away from emergency response. The message from people who have experienced homelessness is that early opportunities to intervene, provide support, and ultimately prevent the harms of homelessness, are too often missed’.⁶⁹

- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended that a more integrated ‘place-based’ approach to homelessness prevention and early intervention be developed that includes:

- establishing a national strategic framework for prevention and early intervention
- identifying the structural support and resources required to support ‘place-based’ programs
- funding for ‘place-based’ research and pilot programs.⁷⁰

- Recognising the importance of stopping homelessness early in life, the inquiry also recommended a focus on prevention and early intervention of youth homelessness.

- A review of the evidence to prevent youth homelessness identified that:

- government should engage young people with lived experience of homelessness in development of policies, practices, and legislation
- there is a need to adopt a cross-govt commitment to prevent youth homelessness
- initiatives should address all structural and systems prevention, early intervention, eviction prevention and housing stabilisation
- a screening tool should be developed to identify youth at risk of homelessness adapted for all public systems
- there is a need to raise awareness of available services and supports

- work is needed to prevent exits into homelessness from Government institutions with effective exit planning and aftercare
- the length of support should be based on need and for extended time and youth should have choice and voice
- homelessness legislation should focus on preventing youth homelessness and youth discharges from public systems
- there is a need for investment in affordable housing and evidence-based models of youth housing, e.g. Housing First for Youth, Host Homes, and Foyer. To be grounded in principles of youth choice, youth voice, and self-determination.⁷¹

- The NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales recommended:

- a community awareness campaign targeted to older people about the risks of homelessness
- establishment of a specialist housing information and support service for older people, like the Home at Last model in Victoria
- training and education to help frontline service providers understand the diverse experiences of older people and homelessness, and how to appropriately support them
- education for health professionals, social workers, police, and other service providers about domestic and family violence as it manifests for older women and their families.⁷²

- Prevention of homelessness is included as one of the three outcome areas in the Homelessness NSW Theory of Change for systemic reform to end homelessness together. This is based on input from more than 200 organisations and over 650 people including people with lived experience of homelessness and service providers.⁷³

Housing First principles are embedded in policy and practice

- Housing First offers people with high and complex needs experiencing homelessness immediate access to permanent housing and voluntary wrap around support with no preconditions.⁷⁴
- The NSW government commissioned AHURI to research considerations for a Housing First approach in NSW. It found that:
 - Housing First is highly effective in facilitating housing stability, enabling access to services, improving some non-housing outcomes, and is a cost-effective form of support for people experiencing chronic homelessness with a high complexity of need.⁷⁵ Though most evidence is based on programs targeted towards chronic homelessness, emerging programs and evidence show effectiveness for other cohorts.⁷⁶
 - The effectiveness of Housing First programs is attributed to the provision of housing, length of support and intensity of support which provides stability for those experiencing homelessness to address other support needs.
- Though Housing First programs can be effective in a range of different system contexts, time-limited Housing First programs leave clients vulnerable to repeat homelessness by requiring them to navigate and re-enter the broader housing and homelessness systems.⁷⁷ Flatau et al (2021) identified five key actions to end homelessness in Australia, including ‘comprehensive application of Housing First programs linked to supportive housing for those entering permanent housing with histories of homelessness and high health and other service needs’.⁷⁸
- Duff et al (2022) found strong evidence to support use of the housing first philosophy to guide the coordinated delivery of housing, health and social care supports for people exiting

residential treatment settings for mental health and substance use issues.⁷⁹ The Housing First model maintains that ‘secure housing must be provided for all individuals living with complex and persistent mental health and/or substance use problems, regardless of their apparent housing readiness’.⁸⁰

- The NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues inquiry into homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales recommended the NSW Government incorporate Housing First principles into its approach to addressing homelessness in the state and urge the Australian Government to do the same.⁸¹ It also recommended consideration be given to expanding the scope of Together Home to capture a wider range of older people, as well as the feasibility of ongoing funding.⁸²
- The Productivity Commission’s review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement recommended that Housing First should be a key reform area and that the Australian, State and Territory Governments commit to expanding Housing First programs to improve housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.⁸³
- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended that Housing First principles should be incorporated into any national funding agreements with state and territories.⁸⁴

The workforce is strong and capable

- There are significant workforce challenges in the homelessness service system, including in attracting and retaining skilled workers. This is related to the complexity of the work, the high physical and psychological demands on workers, insufficient funding and competition with other human services workforces.⁸⁵
- Sustaining and developing the sector workforce on a meaningful scale also requires the supply of social and affordable housing, improved job security, access to

more competitive remuneration and improved investment into workforce training and development.⁸⁶

- The homelessness service system is highly reliant on the quality and safety of its service providers and their delivery of appropriate supports, especially for priority cohorts. In particular, the high rates of homelessness within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities indicates a critical need for culturally safe and appropriate service delivery, including expansion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led programs.⁸⁷

Aboriginal expertise and leadership are respected

- Priority Reform One under Closing the Gap is to establish formal partnerships and shared decision making between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives. This priority received overwhelming support during consultations on Closing the Gap.⁸⁸
- Closing the Gap is underpinned by the belief that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of policies, programs and services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved. It also recognises that structural change in the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is needed to close the gap.⁸⁹
- Aboriginal stakeholders have told us the NSW Government can engage meaningfully with Aboriginal communities by supporting local leadership and expertise within Aboriginal communities, engaging the community early and regularly, with safe spaces for expressing views, and respecting Aboriginal ways of knowing and being.⁹⁰
- The NSW Government engaged ARTD and the Cultural and Indigenous Research Centre Australia (CIRCA) to provide advice on meaningful stakeholder engagement for development of the new homelessness strategy. Aboriginal stakeholders advised the Government that we must:

- put Aboriginal voice and experiences first
- support local leadership and expertise within Aboriginal communities
- empower Aboriginal communities to co-design solutions
- develop a prior understanding of the community
- build an ongoing relationship between the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and community
- engage the community early and regularly
- respect Aboriginal ways of knowing and being
- respect cultural protocols
- have a clear and transparent scope
- recognise and acknowledge prior harm
- provide a safe space for expressing views
- tell participants how their data will be stored, shared and distributed
- close the loop with consultation feedback.⁹¹
- The Productivity Commission’s review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement recommended that that State and Territory Governments should have housing and homelessness strategies in place for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander outcomes that are developed using co-design processes.⁹²
- The Audit Office of NSW recommended DCJ establish mechanisms to ensure that Aboriginal people and people with lived experience of homelessness have input into key decisions about addressing homelessness.⁹³
- Evaluation data indicates that a lack of cultural understanding the provision of culturally inappropriate services can act as a key barrier to the delivery of tenancy support programs for Aboriginal clients.⁹⁴ Similarly, critical success factors in implementing Housing First models includes providing services

in a culturally appropriate way to better support tenants from diverse backgrounds.

People with lived experience inform service design

- No one understands homelessness better than people who have first-hand experience of it and their insights are invaluable for designing and delivering effective interventions. Evidence suggests that the inclusion of lived experience voices results in improved outcomes for people experiencing homelessness.
- ‘Empowerment’ should be considered in the prevention of homelessness, for example through inclusion of people with lived experience of homelessness that is not tokenistic and that results in change.⁹⁵
- A review of the evidence to prevent youth homelessness found that government should engage young people with lived experience of homelessness in development of policies, practices, and legislation.⁹⁶

Person-centred principles are embedded in policy and practice

- A person-centred approach is based on human rights and ensures that ‘a person’s safety is prioritised, that their right to make choices is recognised and that their inherent dignity is central to the design and delivery of services’.⁹⁷
- A person-centred approach is driven by what the person needs, rather than what a program provides or whether the person fits eligibility criteria. The traditional system-centred approach requires a person to fit the program or system before they are supported, creating barriers to support.
- Person-centred service delivery involves seeing the person and their strengths, rather than a label or category, and providing them with a service that is tailored to their specific needs and wishes.⁹⁸ It centres practice on what is safe and meaningful to people seeking

support and partners with them to deliver holistic, strengths-based and trauma responsive services.⁹⁹

- A person-centred approach requires a coordinated approach to service delivery as no service can meet all of a person’s needs (also see *Local decision making and service delivery and Integrated service system* in the tables below). A person-centred approach is supported by flexible contracting to allow services to be flexible and provide a tailored service.
- The Productivity Commission’s review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement recommended trialling flexible funding that allows services to provide supports for as long as they are needed.¹⁰⁰
- Person-centred practice focuses on people, families, and communities rather than services and systems. It centres practice on what is safe and meaningful to people seeking support. It seeks to partner with people who are without a home to deliver holistic, strengths-based and trauma responsive services to all people.¹⁰¹

Service planning and delivery is flexible, localised and joined up

- Flexible, localised planning, design and delivery (also known as ‘place-based’) empowers local communities to assess their specific needs and co-design service solutions with relevant stakeholders, including community leaders, people with lived experience, and service providers.
- Place-based approaches are producing positive results in Australia and globally, including greater uptake of services within communities and improved use of community assets and infrastructure.¹⁰² This leads to better outcomes for families and economic benefits to the broader service system. Best practice indicates that the development and implementation of homelessness strategies should be based on place-based assessment of demand and suitability.¹⁰³
- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social

Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended a more integrated ‘place-based’ approach to homelessness prevention and early intervention, with a national strategic framework for prevention and early intervention; localised structural support and resources to support ‘place-based’ programs; and funding for ‘place-based’ research and pilot programs.¹⁰⁴

- The NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues Inquiry into homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales recommended the NSW Government consider additional funding and support to place-based services that target older people who are experiencing homelessness.¹⁰⁵
- A human rights approach recognises that homelessness is a complex social problem that intersects with a range of other social, economic, health and justice issues. It is more than a housing issue. It involves establishing integrated cross-sectoral responses, involving mainstream systems and specialist services that addresses the many causes and effects of homelessness.¹⁰⁶
- Evidence from the UK and elsewhere suggests that the struggle for stable housing both shapes and is shaped by numerous factors such as financial stability, housing market dynamics, access to health care and involvement with the care system. To drive long term change, we must consider the drivers and root causes of the issue. A systems-thinking approach allows us to understand homelessness as a complex and adaptive system, which requires an integrated response.¹⁰⁷
- The Audit Office of NSW recommended DCJ establish arrangements that enable partner agencies, the specialist homelessness services sector, the community housing sector, Aboriginal people and people with lived experience of homelessness to inform key homelessness policy decisions.¹⁰⁸
- Research on how to improve support for people exiting institutional settings found that:

- Transitions out of institutional settings bring significant risks of housing insecurity, which can be reduced by more effective service coordination—especially between systems (e.g. housing, mental health, substance use, family services and corrections).
- Housing support should become a more explicit part of transition/discharge planning across the mental health, substance use treatment, corrections and out-of-home care sectors.
- Service coordination roles can promote service integration. This should be supplemented by greater involvement of ‘peer’ or ‘service user’ representatives.
- ‘Best practice’ programs show how services can be effectively coordinated to support improved housing outcomes, using Housing First approach.¹⁰⁹
- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to strengthen training across the health and community sectors on prevention of homelessness, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable children and families, including training on the impact of homelessness and family, domestic and sexual violence on the social and emotional wellbeing of children.¹¹⁰
- improvements to responses to homelessness.¹¹²
- The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry into homelessness in Australia recommended the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to improve data collection specific to vulnerable groups, including funding research to better understand prevalence of homelessness and demand for services amongst older women, people in regional and remote areas, veterans and people in the LGBTIQ+ community.¹¹³
- There is a need for improved evaluation and research about what works to end homelessness in Australia. Embedding evaluation and continuous improvement mechanisms within the design of the Strategy will be critical for the success of system reforms.

Systems, tools and measurement are consistent, accessible and fit for purpose

- Improved data collection and measurements is a critical input to a safe and sustainable system. Evidence suggests that improved data gathering and sharing can aid better predictive decision-making.¹¹¹
- The Audit Office of NSW recommended in its review of the previous Homelessness Strategy that the NSW Government establish a means to regularly collect client outcomes data and feedback; and use this to drive

Summary of evidence on responses to address homelessness amongst children and young people

There is a wide body of evidence that details possible responses to address child and youth homelessness, evaluations of current programs, report on stakeholders' views, reports on system reform, and data on the nature and extent of need and service usage.

Source	Description
<u>A Place to Go</u>	A <i>Place to Go</i> in Penrith aims to improve support and deliver a better response for 10–17-year-olds in contact with the criminal justice system, to decrease the likelihood of re-offending. A <i>Place to Go</i> is a collaborative initiative delivered by government and non-government organisations. The initiative uses a young person's contact with Police and the court or both as an opportunity to intervene early by linking them with appropriate community supports and services, court liaison staff, cross-agency panels and dedicated short-term transitional accommodation (A <i>Place to Go</i> House).
<u>A plan to end homelessness in Victoria 2022</u> Victoria: Council to Homeless Persons	Family intervention/ mediation/ reconciliation: Support for young people and families before young people become homeless.
<u>ACYP Consultation Report 2017 – What children and young people experiencing homelessness say</u> Advocate for Children and Young People	Key proposals include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• State-wide education campaign: Children and young people-led campaign to increase awareness of homelessness and its impacts on young people.• Ensure staff and service of Link2Home is tailored for young people, including to ensure they feel respected and supported.• Increase in clinics and rehabilitation facilities with the capacity to support young people with complex needs.• Ensure young people can travel safely to and from accommodation (e.g. travel vouchers).• Reduce cost of obtaining driver's licence.• Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) resources to include comprehensive supports for young people with complex needs, including where interacting with the justice system.• Increase SHS accommodation for children and young people who would otherwise be detained due to not having secure accommodation.

Source	Description
<p><u>CREATE Position Paper No. 15: Priority Access to Housing</u></p> <p>CREATE Foundation –National Housing and Homelessness Submission 2023</p>	<p>Supports for young people leaving OOHC to create stable housing futures.</p> <p>Housing priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guaranteed housing placements until 25 years • Post-care support package of \$16k per annum • Increasing housing options including foyers and private rental subsidies • Stable wrap around support in place on exit • Free on campus accommodation for OOHC leavers at university <p>CREATE support initiatives to increase housing options and priority for young people leaving care and support and advocacy for young people to navigate housing assistance systems including making applications.</p>
<p><u>‘LGBTIQ+ Homelessness: A Review of the Literature’</u>, <i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i>, July 2019</p> <p>B Fraser, N Pierse, E Chisholm, H Cook</p>	<p>Report identifies prevalence of homelessness among LGBTIQ+ young people. LGBTIQ+ people ‘comprise an estimated 20–40% of homeless populations, whilst only comprising 5–10% of the wider population’ [5,6]. Finding that intersectionality and impact of layered identities increases prevalence.</p>
<p><u>A Safe and Decent Place to Live: Towards a Housing First Framework for Youth</u>, <i>Canadian Observatory on Homelessness</i></p> <p>S Gaetz 2014</p> <p><u>Preventing youth homelessness; An international review of evidence</u>, <i>Wales Centre for Public Policy</i></p> <p>K Schwan, D French, S Gaetz, A Ward, J Ackerman, M Redman August 2018</p>	<p>Develop and implement a coordinated assessment specifically designed for children and young people. This improves triage and helps coordinate responses.</p> <p>Potential tools include Outcomes Star (MacKeith et al., 2006). Another one that is used in some communities in Canada (such as Hamilton by the Street Youth Planning Collaborative) is called the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)⁷.</p> <p>The Youth Assessment and Prioritization Tool (YAP) is a Canadian tool developed to screen for risk of homelessness amongst youth. It is generally conducted when a vulnerable young person comes into contact with the social service system. The tool consists of 22 mandatory pre-screen questions focused on short and long-term risk of homelessness, followed by an interview (if necessary).</p> <p>Pathways that offer a mechanism for children and young people to develop social relationships, community engagement, cultural engagement and other meaningful activity.</p>
<p><u>This is Housing First 4 Youth program model guide</u></p> <p>S Gaetz, H Walter, C Story HF4Y Canada, 2021</p>	<p>A model developed in Canada. Includes an underpinning philosophy and considers program, system, service delivery, individual intervention levels. Housing first (congregate and scattered) plus a defined model of support.</p> <p>Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to the children and young people in crisis/medium-term housing to assist them to reconnect with family. • Support for families of young people (as opposed to children and young people themselves) experiencing homelessness esp. early intervention and support for care families, esp. for mental health or alcohol and other drugs or criminal behaviour. The aim is to facilitate reunification even from supported accommodation.

Source	Description
<p><u>Housing for All: Youth Homelessness Strategy 2023–2025</u> Government of Ireland</p>	<p>The Irish Youth Homelessness Strategy focuses on prevention, supportive exits, and quality crisis accommodation.</p> <p>Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities used as accommodation for children and young people have been designed to meet their needs i.e. from lived experience. This may also include space for family visits to foster connection. • Clarifying the relationship of mandatory reporting and SHS to determine when it is counterproductive by deterring children and young people from seeking assistance or impeding their access to assistance. Ensuring the connections between OOHC and homelessness support the safety of the young person. • Making programs available to address the barriers to leaving homelessness, including general life skills, difficulties with parenting, unemployment or training. This can extend to programs, mentoring, individual support, and advocacy to assist in identifying and accessing resources. • Shared accommodation in public or social housing, making it possible for young people (who are capable) to live with others in social housing. This may require separate tenancies and require some way of helping tenants select each other. • Individual-focused youth support programs for children and young people in social or private housing (that is, not in medium-term supportive housing) that continues for the duration of their need. • Vocational education providing a tailored program for training for vulnerable young people to assist in transitioning to further education or employment. Specialised guidance. • Reviewing all relevant policies applicable to child and young person crisis and medium-term supported housing to ensure they are facilitating program access and not putting in place unintended barriers. • Developing privacy and safety strategies for young people using crisis accommodation.
<p><u>Redesign of a homelessness service system for young people</u>, AHURI Final Report 327, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, 16 April 2020. D MacKenzie, T Hand, C Zufferey, S McNelis, A Spinney, and D Tedmanson</p>	<p>Comprehensive report considering drivers, prevalence of youth homelessness and systems approach to addressing youth homelessness more effectively.</p> <p>Recommends service planning and design to shift from a program-oriented approach to a place-based cross-sectoral ‘collective impact’ framework for support and service delivery for at-risk and homeless young people.</p> <p>Involves a common agenda, shared measurements and small area data analysis, differentiated but coordinated activity, communication, support structures.</p> <p>The report notes that elements that support the Community of Schools and Services (COSS) ecosystem of support services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence-based models of support • workforce development • new structures and processes of collective governance • infrastructure such as youth housing options • digital capability to support a more complex cross-sectoral ecosystem in which services are connected as collaborating participants in the community collective. <p>Simplify contact with support services for young people through regional and sub-regional Youth Entry Points.</p> <p>Commit to build cultural safety in all organisations and investing in developing Aboriginal workers to build capacity in Aboriginal services.</p>

Source	Description
<p><u>GALFA LGBTI Homelessness Research Project: Stage 1 Report: LGBTI Homelessness: Preliminary findings on risks, service needs and use</u></p> <p>R McNair, C Andrews, S Parkinson, D Dempsey January 2017</p>	<p>Report on prevalence and risk of homelessness for young LGBTIQA+ people. Identifies previous studies and research on experiences and issues for this cohort.</p>
<p><u>'Interventions for Youth Homelessness: A Systematic Review of Effectiveness Studies'. Children and Youth Services Review 116</u></p> <p>M Morton, S Kudley, R Epstein, A Farrell May 2020</p>	<p>There is a lack of rigorous evaluation, but prevention programs showed promise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YVLifeSet, an intensive case management with supportive services program for youth who transitioned out of juvenile justice or foster care – relative to the control group, the intervention group had lower rates of experiencing homelessness, as well as improvements in other outcomes. • The Behaviour Analysis Services Program evaluation showed positive changes in housing stability, the only outcome reported. • The Geelong Project is a coordinated homelessness prevention model among schools and community organizations involving universal screening for student risk for homelessness and tailored case management. It has reported reductions in the number of students entering the local homelessness system based on administrative data. But further evaluations including a prospective comparison group are needed to confirm that the observed effects on student homelessness are due to the program and not the result of other conditions or changes. <p>Family strengthening programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies generally showed promising results for outcomes related to youth well-being and behavioural health, but little is known about direct effects of these interventions on preventing or reducing youth homelessness. <p>Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous and long-term evaluation of shelter and housing programs for improving young people's housing stability is lacking. Experimental evaluation of a rental assistance and support program and quasi-experimental evaluations of supportive housing programs show promising results for improving housing stability. Low-rigor evaluations of transitional housing programs also reported promising results for various outcomes, but high attrition rates and a lack of comparison group warrant higher degrees of caution with interpretation.
<p><u>Lived Experience of Aboriginal young people in Mount Druitt</u></p> <p>Mounty Yarns, (no date)</p>	<p>Powerful report on the lived experience of young Aboriginal people in Mount Druitt outlining engagement and experiences with education, police and housing services. Highlights key areas and approaches to improve safety and supports.</p>
<p><u>A new model for youth housing in Australia</u></p> <p>Nous, Melbourne City Mission, September 2023</p>	<p>Framework developed by not-for-profit stakeholders from across Australia.</p> <p>The model prioritises provision of housing, services and support and subsidies for viability.</p> <p>The Framework notes the importance of support following a young person, that follows the young person to provide stable support through transitions, pulling in integrated care as needed.</p>
<p><u>Lighthouse Model of Care Lighthouse Foundation</u></p>	<p>Lighthouse Foundation is a Victorian approach that 'sees, recognises, and responds to... complex features in young people'.</p> <p>The Lighthouse Model of Care integrates trauma-informed practice, attachment theory and contemporary psychoanalytical theory to create a holistic therapeutic treatment environment in which the social and emotional capacities of young people are developed and enriched.</p>

Source	Description
<p><u>Limerick Youth Housing Evaluation</u> E Lawlor, N Bowen (Just Economics), 2017</p>	<p>Two notable features of Limerick Youth Housing are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness are offered stable and secure housing • Local services work collaboratively to ensure that young people receive a range of supports so they can sustain their tenancies as they transition into adulthood. <p>Key initiatives applied in the Irish context include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthening supports for young people and families experiencing conflict, violence and/or breakdown. The aim is to take a young person lens to programs. • prioritising accommodation access and improved quality. • urgent access to mental health supports for children and young people entering crisis.
<p><u>Point Source Youth Scales Direct Cash Transfers as Prevention for Youth Homelessness to Five U.S. Cities</u> (prnewswire.com) 12 September 2023</p>	<p>Direct cash transfers:</p> <p>This program had a no wrong door culture for young people most at risk. It provided one-time payments of USD\$1000-2000. After receiving the payments 93% of young people did not return to homelessness after 12 months. The payment could be spent on anything but was mostly spent on rental assistance and housing deposits (bonds). This program distinguishes itself by being fast (same day) and flexible.</p>
<p><u>Homelessness Prevention and Diversion Fund: Using flexible funds to house youth and young adults equitably and sustainably</u> A Way to Home Washington, 2022</p>	<p>It notes that it is part of the overall infrastructure for cross-sector and system-wide collaboration for preventing and ending, including Youth By-Name lists and case conferencing. It also relies on capable non-discriminatory staff administering it.</p> <p>More recently, a December 2023 report on the results of a monthly cash stipends of \$750 per month for people in California who were homeless. The study found that almost two-thirds fewer people had spent time ‘unsheltered’ after 6 months.</p>
<p><u>Miracle Friends and Miracle Money in California: A mixed-methods experiment of social support and guaranteed income for people experiencing homelessness</u> B Henwood, Bo-Kyung E Kim, A Stein, G Corletto, H Suthar, K Adler, M Mazzocchi, J Ip, D Padgett, April 2024</p>	<p>This evidence review identifies what:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • services are effective in addressing, reducing or preventing homelessness. • features of services are key to being effective. • the barriers are to addressing homelessness. • works for specific groups of people. <p>The review includes programs that specifically target young people and identifies the need for specialised programs for young people.</p>
<p><u>A rapid evidence assessment of what works in homelessness services. social care institute for excellence</u> S Sheikhand D Teeman, 2018</p>	<p>This evidence review identifies what:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • services are effective in addressing, reducing or preventing homelessness. • features of services are key to being effective. • the barriers are to addressing homelessness. • works for specific groups of people. <p>The review includes programs that specifically target young people and identifies the need for specialised programs for young people.</p>

Source	Description
<p><u>Evidence of programs to address homelessness: an Evidence Check rapid review</u> brokered by the Sax Institute for the NSW Department of Communities and Justice</p> <p>JW Toumbourou and J Heerde, 2022</p>	<p>The key findings from this report on the evidence of effectiveness of different models to prevent and address youth homelessness identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective programs including Intensive Family Preservation Services, Functional Family Therapy, and On the Way Home (all for children and young people in OOHC); Treatment Foster Care Oregon; Take Charge/Better Futures; Pathway Program and YVLifeSet. • service capacity building. • positive effects from creating ongoing supportive relationships. • some improvement in educational outcomes and non-entry to SHS through the COSS program, but there was no control condition or comparison limited analysis.
<p><u>Under 16 Homelessness: Practice Guidelines for Specialist Homelessness Services</u></p> <p>Tasmanian Government, no date.</p>	<p>Tailored policies, program and practice guidelines for children and young people.</p> <p>The Care Team brings together a group of key people identified by a child/young person as being important in their life. This may include family, parent/caregivers, legal guardian, relevant professionals and an education representative and cultural representative. The process is early identification and a meeting of the care team on presentation to SHS.</p>
<p><u>Under 16 Homelessness: A Policy Framework for Tasmania</u></p> <p>Tasmanian Government, no date.</p>	<p>This policy framework outlines commitments and responsibilities.</p> <p>The Practice Guidelines for SHS include overall objectives, roles and responsibilities. They are aimed at unaccompanied children and young people under 16 years. They present a model of care and cover the intersection of other Acts including OOHC, justice, mental health etc.</p>
<p>NSW Department of Communities and Justice, <u>Pathways to Homelessness Final Report</u></p> <p>NSW Government, December 2021.</p>	<p>This report analyses pathways and touch points within the service system for SHS users, providing potential engagement and early intervention points.</p>
<p><u>The Roadmap for the Prevention of Youth Homelessness</u></p> <p>S Gaetz, K Schwan, M Redman, D French, E Dej, 2018</p>	<p>This Canadian Roadmap targets prevention across the domains of structural prevention, systems prevention, early intervention, eviction prevention, housing stabilisation and Duty to Assist.</p> <p>Structural prevention includes poverty reduction, promoting social inclusion, and reducing adverse childhood experiences.</p> <p>Duty to Assist, enshrining housing as a human right, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a legal duty to make reasonable efforts to end a young person’s homelessness or stabilize their housing. • young people provided with information, advice, and housing-led supports. • provincial / territorial legislation, delivered at the community level. • youth have a place to access supports. • adults have a place to refer young people. • eviction prevention for young people. <p>The Roadmap outlines prevention activities at multiple levels, but specifies eviction prevention for young people as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthening laws and legislation protecting tenants • provision of information and advice for youth and their families • provision of financial supports for tenants • access to legal supports, advice, and representation • targeted and timely crisis intervention

Source	Description
<p><u>A way home: Youth homelessness community planning toolkit</u> A Turner, 2016</p>	<p>This toolkit requires separate child/young person focused regional plans that sit alongside or are part of the new place-based planning approach, and which give effect to the Strategy and Action Plan.</p>
<p><u>Upstream Australia</u></p>	<p>Upstream Australia has produced many reports on tackling youth homelessness effectively. The organisation provides backbone and data analysis support under the Community of Schools and Services (COSS) model. COSS involves universal screening and robust responses from schools and supports in the service system. The incidence of youth homelessness declined following implementation of the model in Geelong.</p> <p>The toolkit is designed as a resource for organisations and/or individuals considering or already leading community efforts to develop strategic responses to youth homelessness.</p> <p>Reports from Upstream Australia include analysis of the effectiveness of COSS Models, Youth Models, Leaving Care, Rough Sleeping, Private Rental Subsidies, Youth Housing Models and Place-based Models.</p>
<p><u>WA's \$5M youth homelessness effort is ramping up. Is it working?</u> E Whitman, 15 August 2023, Cascade PBS</p>	<p>Key initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courts as identification pathways for high-risk young people • Using data routinely collected by courts to assess a young person's history to gauge risk. Referring high-risk young people to a navigator, who can connect them to resources. • Providing cash assistance to young people to overcome common barriers when leaving state system, e.g. clothing for a job interview, school supplies, rent. • A rapid response team to triage and connect young person to services including legal aid, housing support, family reconciliation services after discharge from a state system, which starts while they are still in scheme. Note, this is for Washington. It has been relabelled as the Youth and Young Adult Housing Response Team.
<p><u>YFoundations Submission to National Housing & Homelessness Plan Issues Paper</u> Yfoundations, 30 September 2023</p>	<p>Key proposals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding the COSS model to more communities. • Better access to mental health services where children and young people with serious issues such as suicide ideation are not having to wait for six months to get an appointment as we are hearing from regional areas. • Supports focused on vulnerable young people, such as the reunification element of Homelessness Youth Assistance Program (HYAP) or Ruby's. • Requiring that young people leaving OOHC are monitored for accommodation at point of exit and at regular periods thereafter. • Improved OOHC responses particularly for children and young people who are older and often not considered a priority or at risk of significant harm. • Improved and expanded supportive accommodation-based options as diversion from youth justice. Improved and expanded supported exits for young people from youth justice. • Make facilitating access to NDIS supports a priority in crisis and medium-term supportive accommodation. Better access to supported exits into the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) where appropriate. • Specialised responses and crisis accommodation for young people experiencing DFV. • An increase in crisis beds so children and young people know they have a place to sleep tonight when their situation is desperate and dangerous. • Exit options from crisis accommodation such as transitional housing (for 2-5 years) and medium-term housing (a higher level of support for those with more complex needs for about two years). These exit options will also provide longer term options for young people who currently refuge hop every three months due to time restrictions imposed on service providers.

Source	Description
<p data-bbox="113 562 400 734"><u>Young, in trouble and with nowhere to go: Homelessness adolescents' pathways into and out of detention in NSW</u></p> <p data-bbox="113 752 355 779">YFoundations, 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="422 152 1520 309">• Exit options from crisis accommodation such as transitional housing (for 2-5 years) and medium-term housing (a higher level of support for those with more complex needs for about two years). These exit options will also provide longer term options for young people who currently refuge hop every three months due to time restrictions imposed on service providers. <li data-bbox="422 331 1385 360">• Integrate Youth Foyers into the exit pathways for young people leaving SHS. <li data-bbox="422 383 1501 439">• More affordable and social housing for young people. Rarely is public and community housing quarantined for young people as other cohorts are often prioritised. <li data-bbox="422 461 1513 517">• More social housing for young people to live in permanently if they are not suitable for the private rental market due to high and complex needs. <hr/> <p data-bbox="422 562 858 591">Key proposals in the report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="422 613 1433 642">• Bail Act reform to remove the offence of breaching a bail condition for juveniles. <li data-bbox="422 665 1509 748">• NSW Government to collect and publish data on the housing status of adolescents entering and leaving detention, the number of homeless adolescents detailed, and the length of time young people are detailed. <li data-bbox="422 770 1517 853">• Youth Justice, Child Protection, SHS providers, NGOs, and peaks to develop policy to identify responsibilities to support homeless adolescents in sentenced and unsentenced detention with a focus on securing housing options for young people quickly. <li data-bbox="422 875 1513 1534">• Supports to prevent adolescents from entering or staying in detention due to homelessness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="459 965 1086 994">– expand Bail Assistance Line to all-hours service. <li data-bbox="459 1016 1513 1077">– increase SHS contracts to secure housing options and avoid young people entering detention. <li data-bbox="459 1099 1054 1128">– fund Aboriginal-specific bail accommodation. <li data-bbox="422 1151 1481 1211">• Supports reunification with families where possible for young people on community orders and when leaving detention. <li data-bbox="422 1234 1417 1534">• Increase diverse housing options to best house and support young people with complex needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="459 1323 778 1352">– therapeutic foster care <li data-bbox="459 1375 836 1404">– therapeutic residential care <li data-bbox="459 1426 847 1456">– AOD rehabilitation programs <li data-bbox="459 1478 1078 1507">– adapted placements for Aboriginal adolescents <li data-bbox="459 1529 1182 1559">– all with a focus on recovering and reunifying with family.

Footnotes

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