

MEDIA RELEASE

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Community organisations join forces calling for immediate increase to income support payments to tackle youth homelessness

Five leading homelessness community support organisations have joined forces to call on the Government to substantially increase JobSeeker and Youth Allowance in next week's Federal Budget to tackle Australia's youth homelessness epidemic.

While we welcome the Government's consideration of the recommendations to income support reform outlined by the Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee and Women's Economic Equality Taskforce, it is our collective view that the rate of working age income support payments needs to be raised for all age groups to reflect the reality of experience of people relying on income support to live.

Increasing income support payments is an essential step to reduce the numbers of Australians, particularly young people, being forced into homelessness by rising rents and the rising cost of living.

Analysis by Homelessness Australia showed while overall youth incomes support payments in Victoria increased 10 to 12 per cent in two years, rents surged 24 per cent. A young person who paid 63 per cent of their Youth Allowance income two years prior to share a two-bedroom unit will now pay 73 per cent of their income.

Anglicare's 2023 [Rental Affordability Snapshot](#) shows that any person on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance looking for a share house would not be able to afford any of the rentals available in several states. ***Some young people are now being left with just \$13 a day to cover essentials such as food, transport, medicine, and other essentials.***

Our services are stretched to breaking point meaning we have to turn away some young people who have no choice but to return to violent homes, couch surfing or unsafe adult rooming and boarding houses.

We can't allow this to continue – our young people deserve to be able to live in dignity.

Interviews: Melbourne City mission CEO Vicki Sutton
Uniting Vic Tas CEO Bronwyn Pike AO

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