

MEDIA RELEASE



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Churches of Christ Care supports national Youth Homelessness Matters Day

On any given night in Australia 105,000 people are homeless and nearly half of these are under the age of 25.

National Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD) is about raising public awareness of youth homelessness, and to celebrate the resilience of young people who are experiencing homelessness in Australia.

This year, YHMD has adopted the theme 'Hide and Seek – the hidden nature of youth homelessness,' to reflect the fact that many young people who are homeless are couch surfing in the homes of friends and family.

"Youth homelessness is a significant issue in Queensland, with roughly 20,000 young people homeless across the state," Churches of Christ Care Director David Swain said.

"There is a need to highlight not only these statistics, but that there are various levels of homelessness, and not every homeless young person is 'sleeping rough' or is a stereotypical street person. There are varying degrees of homelessness and therefore there needs to be varying degrees of support and help for different circumstances.

"Recent research has also indicated that if young people are not properly supported when they first experience homelessness, they have an increased chance of being homeless in their adult lives.

"As a not-for-profit organisation, and as one of the largest non-government providers of child protection, fostering, housing, and related services in Queensland, we are committed to ensuring that the youth in our communities have their basic needs met, accommodation being a priority.

"Churches of Christ Care provides a range of accommodation to young people up to the age of 16 who are under child protection orders from the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services), through our program Care Pathways.

"We have services across the state, including in Brisbane, Yatala, Townsville, Mt Isa, Caboolture, Mackay, Ipswich, Maryborough and Bundaberg.

"As well as working with young people, we are committed to working with families to ensure that contributors to homelessness can be addressed. We are committed to ensure that young people can have a home as well as a house.

"We support YHMD in their aims to communicate that with good support and accommodation, young people can move forward and live meaningful and productive lives."

2011 Youth Homelessness Matters Day will be held on Wednesday, 6 April, during National Youth Week.

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About Churches of Christ Care

Churches of Christ Care is a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland—a group of churches that is part of the worldwide Christian church.

We strive to create an inclusive, caring, compassionate environment that meets our clients' needs without discrimination or prejudice. Everyone is welcome to call on our help regardless of their religious background.

Churches of Christ Care is one of Queensland's leading providers of early childhood, child protection, affordable housing, retirement living and aged care services. We are a not-for-profit organisation that supports more than 27,000 clients each year in urban, rural and remote areas.

We operate 137 services throughout Queensland with the support of more than 2,800 staff and over 700 volunteers.

Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.