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## **Young women continue to be the face of homelessness**

The data for specialist homeless services was released today again showing that young women 15 -19 years of age are most likely to receive support from a specialist youth homelessness service. One in every 105 Australians who are homeless used a homelessness service last financial year.

The news is not surprising for Ms Maria Leebeek the Executive Officer of the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition. She stated “Services were so concerned about the level of young women’s homelessness, and the lack of focus in the new homelessness funding, that we have commenced a Young Women’s Housing Group”.

The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition has completed a report that has been exploring the data on where young women are in Queensland and concluded that:

‘... the data has shown that sole parents, particularly young women, are living in poverty. Some of the major causes that contribute to poverty are around structural issues and in particular access to work, education, housing, health services and general community based support services. Young women are therefore at greater risk of homelessness. The data shows that young women are high users of homeless services yet the level of service provision in relation to the need is clearly disproportionate. There clearly needs to be a greater focus on young women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.’

Ms Leebeek went on to state ‘On the 14<sup>th</sup> April we highlighted the plight of young women during the Youth Homelessness Matters Short Film Festival 2010.

The data continues to challenge people’s notion of who is homeless and that much of our homelessness is hidden.

**The Queensland Youth Housing Coalition continues to call for a Queensland Youth Homelessness Action Plan.**

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