



**6<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Being homeless in our State is not an acceptable state of affairs**

In Queensland 25% of our homeless population are children and young people. These young people currently have limited voice through the unfunded peak body Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) that advocates for the needs of homeless young people and the services stretched beyond capacity in their endeavours to house and support them.

QYHC's role is to advocate for young people on a systemic, policy and service delivery level to ensure that homeless Queensland young people are given life opportunities and a way out of homelessness. QYHC was defunded in 2007 but continues to operate with vastly diminishing philanthropic funds.

Queensland's most at risk and marginalised youth are our homeless population. They comprise vulnerable single young women, single parents, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people as well as those from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background. A significant number of our homeless young people are also those who have grown up in the statutory care system.

Approximately 7000 young people in Queensland are without a place to call home. As such they are often unable to access income, education, training, employment or other assistance with the plethora of issues including childhood abuse and trauma so that they can recover and become fully participating members of our community.

QYHC's Executive Officer Ms Maria Leebeek states: *"In 2012 in Queensland the number of homeless young people is a travesty. The numbers who have limited access to support and advocacy is more so."*

QYHC has worked extensively on the Youth Housing Plan in an endeavour to ensure change for the lives of homeless young people. *"Regardless of what the election brings this plan needs traction. Young people in Queensland need a fair go. Being homeless in our State is not an acceptable state of affairs."*

QYHC is calling on all political parties to develop strong policy stances to ensure that youth homelessness and the issues facing homeless young people are urgently addressed. QYHC is also calling on political parties to commit to refunding QYHC and give a voice back to homeless young people in our State.

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***Advocating for homeless young people and the service that support them.***

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