

Annual Report

2021 - 2022



**Queensland Youth
Housing Coalition Inc.**



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Forums - Sector Collaboration

We held a few collaborative forums this year with our sector colleagues, and a few of our own. We began the year responding to sector concerns on the then soon to be actualised legislative changes on the obligation to report sexual offences against children. July 5th saw this legislation come into effect. On 19th July we teamed up with QSAN, WLSQ and YAC to present A Practice Forum on obligation to report sexual offences against children for Youth, Sexual Assault and Women's services featuring:

- Introduction to the Legislation
- The Considerations for QPS / How will Police respond to notifications?
- The implications for practice including Practice scenarios and discussion and useful tools to consider – DRAFT flow chart and DRAFT confidentiality policy.

Due to the enormous interest and significant questions continuing to be raised, we held another Forum and then formed a working group, joined by QNADA and organisations who shared their expertise and case studies. Together we prepared a submission for Attorney General Shannon Fentiman to outline the impact of this legislation on young people alongside recommendations.

Youth Forum - QYHC and YANQ

From couch surfing to stable community placement forum

On 10th November, QYHC in partnership with YANQ hosted an online Forum: 'From couch surfing to stable community placement'.

Guest speakers Siobhan Cosgrave and Peter Schwarz from Barnardos Youth Homelessness Programs in the ACT gave a fantastic presentation. Their work is highly inspirational and provides evidence that there are many ways we can reduce homelessness amongst young people.

Recording of the forum and the presenters PowerPoint are available on YANQ's website at www.yanq.org.au/online-forums





2021 QYHC End of Year Forum

Hosting QYHC's End of Year Forum and Annual General Meeting on the 13th of December was an awesome way to finish the calendar year. After such a long period of time with meetings online, it was refreshing to be able to meet face-to-face and connect with colleagues from the sector. The forum featured presentations from Dovetail's Karl who outlined the needs of young people with complex AOD presentations as well as Brisbane Youth Service's Rhianon who presented their couch surfing assessment tool. We were also treated to a presentation from QYHC's own Dina and John who provided a snapshot of the youth housing and homelessness mapping and modelling project that morphed into the Queensland Moving Forward – All Young People Safely Housed Report.



DECEMBER 13TH, 2.30 PM – 5.00 PM
COME ALONG TO QYHC'S END OF YEAR FORUM & AGM

FEATURING:

Dovetail: Shifting Our Gaze
 Holistic responses to Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) use for our most at risk young people

Over the years youth housing and respite care workers have raised concerns with Dovetail with regard to young people's AOD use. Amongst the concerns: managing intoxication, the binge/crash cycle, and risky behaviours – criminal behaviour, sexual exploitation and injecting drug use.

This is an opportunity for workers to better understand young people's AOD using experience and associated risks and feel more confident in employing relevant and actionable AOD related supports with young people

Dovetail has been working on a practice tool for AOD harm reduction planning. QYHC's end of year forum participants will get a sneak peek. Through this presentation, Dovetail will provide an overview of youth alcohol and other drug (AOD) use, focusing on residential/youth housing settings including:

- Background
- Purpose of the tool
- Theory behind the tool
- Draft tool presentation and consultation
- Next steps

The final product will be launched at Platform 12 25 in April 2022.

Safer Inside? Understanding and Assessing Risks for Couch Surfing Young People
 with Rhianon Vichter-Olsen, Research and Evaluation Manager, Brisbane Youth Service

Conceptualisation of risk for homeless young people is generally predicated on the experiences of rough sleepers. Couch surfing, the most common form of homelessness for young people, it is often viewed as a safer option; a lower priority for intervention and sometimes not even homelessness at all. Innovative research by BYS and Griffith University provides evidence that challenges these assumptions, revealing significant and disproportionately high levels of mental health risk amongst couch surfers, who are predominantly young women and LGBTQ identifying young people. This has led to the QYHC funded evaluated trial of a targeted service response and development of a tailored risk assessment tool specifically seeking to ensure that young couch surfers are not assumed to be safer because they sleep inside. This presentation shares key learnings to challenge widely held practice assumptions and guide evidence-informed sector responses to couch surfing young people.

JOIN US AT
 Brisbane Workers' Community Centre
 2 Latrobe Terrace, Paddington, 4064

QYHC'S PRELIMINARY FINDINGS OF THE MAPPING AND MODELLING PROJECT
QYHC'S 2020 – 2021 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Clockwise from top left: QYHC's Dina, John, Brisbane Youth Service's Rhianon and Dovetail's Karl.





Youth Homelessness Matters Day 2022



Young people at risk who are migrants need basic knowledge of housing and health care
- Piero



You shouldn't have to wait for that one service and person who goes the extra distance and accepts you. That should be the response from all.
- Chloe



It's a basic human right to have a roof over your head.
- Ange



It's very hard to find somewhere to live as a young person. Even with a fulltime job.
- Rhys

YOUNG PEOPLE IN QUEENSLAND ARE LOCKED OUT OF MOST HOUSING OPTIONS. YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY 2022

QUEENSLAND YOUTH HOUSING COALITION INC.
www.qyhcc.org.au



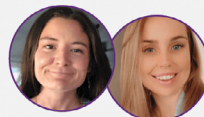
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY

Wednesday 20th April 2022 • 9.30-12.30 • ONLINE

FEATURING:

Jordanah & Caitlin

Managing the Duality: What it is like being a qualified professional and young person with a lived experience working in the community services sector.



Young People Making Tracks

Young people's reflections on their experiences – what assisted them in laying solid foundations or led to them feeling derailed.



Professor Kerry Arabena

Reimagining Indigenous Housing, Health and Wealth: The Necessary Ecological Response to Unlock the Potential in the Indigenous Estate.

It is widely recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (hereon Indigenous) peoples have a holistic conception of physical and mental health and wellbeing underpinned by core cultural values and perspectives, healing practices and traditions designed to strengthen collective identity and cultural continuity, and that have sustained Indigenous peoples for millennia.

It is less widely recognised that Australia's Indigenous peoples have an equally long tradition of architecture, urban design and related economic activity that cannot be meaningfully separated from this, and that have provided a platform for cultural continuity lasting tens of thousands of years. While lacking contemporary standards of 'housing for health' and construction

standards and overcrowding as a starting point, and fully recognising their important physical and mental health and wellbeing implications, this presentation also considers the 'housing for culture' and 'housing for wealth' dimensions to housing and community.

As such it adopts an empowerment-based approach and requires Indigenous people, families and communities to be at the centre of the co-design of contemporary Indigenous housing, and urban or community settings within the context of any entirely new way of 'doing business' in this space.

A descendant of the Meriam people from the Torres Strait, Kerry's work has brought her to the forefront of Indigenous affairs in Australia. A former social worker with a Doctorate in Environmental Science, Kerry has held senior positions including Chair of Indigenous Health at the University of Melbourne, Executive Director of First 1000 Days Australia, CEO of the Lewitja Institute, and Director of Indigenous Health Research at Monash University.



Dr Ann Morgan

Relational being, Agency and Equity.

Relational Practice in an Educational Setting: Reflective Practice, the use of Critical Reflection & Inner Work through the lens of Relational Dynamics. How we can cultivate greater self-reflection and self-awareness to support enhanced awareness of the young people and colleagues with whom we work.

Nikki Jones

Local Engagement Officer – Synapse

"Brain Injury and Young People". Every brain injury is different. Emerging evidence is showing that they are often un- or mis-diagnosed and misunderstood. Limited knowledge about brain injuries and how they impact at-risk young people can result in mistreating the effects of brain injury as negative behaviour. How can we, as a community, address these misconceptions and find a path towards better quality of life?

PLATFORM 1225A





Platform 1225 Online April 2022

QYHC marked Youth Homelessness Matters Day (YHMD) 2022 by holding our online component of Platform 1225. After COVID related delays, it was fantastic to bring the sector together for this event, albeit at a distance.

We were treated to presentations from a range of sector professionals as well as young people with a lived experience of homelessness and in the case of our first presenters - both. We were so fortunate to hear from Jordanah and Caitlin, professionals in the social work and human services field as well as being young people with a lived experiences of homelessness and systems including the child protection system. They shared their experiences of the bias and assumptions they have encountered as workers in the sector and gave us much to think about in terms of how we move forward as a sector honouring and supporting the rich experiences of our staff.



Jordanah & Caitlin

Dr Ann Morgan spoke on the topic of Relational Dynamics, and the need to cultivate greater self-reflection and self-awareness to support enhanced awareness of the young people and colleagues with whom we work. Dr Morgan emphasised that “who you are is the worker you will be”, and that who we are and our life experience is important. “How do I show up?”, “Do I recognise agency and potential?”, and “How do I treat myself and others in my work?”, were key questions for the session.

Dr Ann Morgan was followed by a presentation by Synapse’s Nikki Jones who outlined how brain injury impact young people. Nikki shared about how expansive the brain injury banner is and how prevalent the level of undiagnosed brain injury is that exists in society. Nikki highlighted there is a risk of failing young people when we fail to recognise that many of the choices and behaviours workers see stem from or as part of brain injury. Workers can be in danger of labelling responses as ‘bad behaviour’ and miss giving young people the chance to understand what may be going on in their life. Nikki provided opportunity for participants to learn more about Synapse and their work in this field, how brain injury impacts on young people, and how workers can support.

Coming to us from Melbourne, Professor Kerry Arabena presented on the vital role of Housing in progressing Health, Wealth and Well-being of First Nations Peoples. Through this presentation Professor Arabena outlined the findings of a Summary Report which proposes “an ecological approach to realising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians’ aspirations for a high standard of health and housing, and of personal and collective wealth”. The presentation highlighted that by 2030 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will own over 52% of the entire continent and their waters and in that way are consequently land rich, but cash poor. This work seeks to establish how better outcomes for First Nations peoples can be facilitated, particularly through housing, making sense of what is the Indigenous Estate. Key to this discussion were holistic concepts of health, housing and wealth creation delivered with a focus on trauma-informed, strengths-based approaches.





Professor Arabena highlighted that an ecological approach was undertaken recognising the historical experience of First Nations people over 80,000 years as an ecologically sensitive civilisation, demonstrated through care for country. Within this approach it was acknowledged that houses (or more importantly, homes), have played a pivotal role in allowing and strengthening First Nations cultural identity and promoting cultural continuity. As housing has been the mainstay of community life for thousands of years housing ultimately becomes the foundation of First Nations people's future health and wealth. This historical understanding stands in stark contrast to First Nations people's current experience of poverty and homelessness. Acknowledging that through colonisation First Nations people were effectively locked out of opportunities to generate wealth (through dispossession of land and loss of home – and also recognising the debilitating impact of this on health and wellbeing), the utilisation of the re-established Indigenous Estate provides a basis for generation of health and wealth, and also healing. Inextricably part of a larger ecology, this work proposes that “simultaneous improvements in [health, housing and wealth] must be the goal of those seeking sustainable change for the better.



Dr Ann Morgan & Professor Kerry Arabena

Youth Homelessness Matters Day would not be complete without hearing from young people. We were fortunate to benefit from the wisdom of four young people from our Youth Reference Group. Ange and Rhys shared their concerns about the difficulties that young people are currently facing in trying to enter the private rental market, even while working full-time and earning a decent wage. Pierro provided insight into what it was like being a young homeless migrant in Australia, having little awareness of support systems and no guidance around how to access information. Chloe shared her experiences of being locked out of the youth housing system and not being able to access support due to complex needs. QYHC is immensely thankful to our young people for their vulnerability, wisdom and for being so open and honest in the sharing of their stories. Most of all for being such amazing advocates for other young people who are homeless or at risk.

Arabena, K., Holland, C. & Hamilton, S. (2020). *Reimagining Indigenous Housing, Health and Wealth: Summary Report*, Karabena Publishing, Melbourne. ACT Housing Territory Housing, Housing SA, Housing WA. <https://www.karabenaconsulting.com/resources/reimagining-indigenous-housing-health-and-wealth>

Arabena, K. (2022). *Reimagining Indigenous Housing, Health and Wealth: The Necessary Ecological Response to Unlock the Potential in the Indigenous Estate*. Conference Presentation. Platform 1225 Conference, 20th April, 2022.





THE EVENT YOU'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR!

Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc.
presents

PLATFORM 1225

Building Solid Foundations for Young People aged 12 to 25

MONDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2022 @ RYDGES HOTEL, SOUTH BANK QLD

Headlined & MC'd by

Corey White
Comedian, Author & Political Satirist

MAKING TRACKS
Young people on laying solid foundations for life

PIERRO
Debuts his latest 2 singles including - OK!

VISUAL STORYTELLING
Artists capture the events as the day unfolds

ESSENTIAL NETWORKING
The must-attend event of 2022 for all those who work with young people!

Featuring Guest Speakers, including:

Karl Lucis
Downtail: Shifting Our Gaze
Strategies for Working with Young
People Affected by Drugs and Alcohol

Dr Lindy Annakin
The Complexities of
Speaking Truth to Power

Dr Alastair Ping
Human Behaviour and the Slippery
Slope of Accepting Justification

Chris Hartley
Shelter from the Storm:
Implementation of Trauma Informed Care
in Australian Responses to Homelessness

CLICK TO REGISTER!
learn more at www.qyhc.org.au

We also spent significant time planning our annual Platform 1225 Forum at Rydges. It was great working with such a learned line up. We'll report on the actual event next year!

A huge Thank you to our Platform 1225 Sponsors





parity

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Council
to Homeless
Persons

Homelessness and Young People:
Support During Troubled Times



QYHC sponsored Parity's April 2022 Youth Edition – Homelessness and Young People – Support During Troubled Times, and penned the article: What Does it Mean to be Safe?: A Trauma-informed Approach to Accommodation Design by John and an Opinion piece by Lorraine.

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Queensland Youth
Housing Coalition Inc.

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youth
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My Foundations
YOUTH HOUSING





Queensland Moving Forward – All Young People Safely Housed

The Mapping and Modelling Project, subsequently, the Queensland Moving Forward – All Young People Safely Housed Report was a significant part of our year. It's a project by Queensland Youth Housing Coalition (QYHC) in collaboration with Specialist Youth Homelessness Services (SYHS) to identify what's in place for homeless and at-risk young people in Queensland and develop a contemporary response to their needs. This includes housing and support options that address the myriad of needs young people encounter. This involved mapping what is in place, identifying improvements and recommending further housing and support options needed. Periodic meetings were conducted in 5 regions across Queensland as well as Individual service interviews with every Specialist Youth Housing service to gather the relevant data.

QYHC conducted a literature review. Articles and publications were reviewed, and key topic searches included understanding the current and historical policy context of homelessness in Australia and internationally; recognising key drivers of youth homelessness; identification of strategic approaches undertaken to address homelessness; determining developmental considerations and barriers for homeless young people; case studies of innovative housing models and understanding youth participation. Particular attention focussed on the Australian context and to research published within the last 5 years. A variety of publication types were used to achieve a comprehensive picture of youth homelessness including, journal articles, including the homelessness, health and policy publications, not-for-profit studies and reports, government publications, and material published through research institutes.

The review of current literature of the youth homelessness sector within Australia highlights a passionate desire, and imperative for systemic reform. There is a need for a strategic approach not just to reduce homelessness but eliminate it. QYHC analysed all the data that was captured from the interviews with the Specialist Youth Homelessness Services across Queensland. Data was examined to gain an understanding of organisations/services perceptions and motivations. Young people were consulted to ascertain their experiences and thoughts about what is needed for young people moving forward.

Key Findings from the data analysis included a snapshot of Young People in the sector

- 47% of young people accessing youth housing services identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Approximately 3 in 20 young people identify as LGBTQIAP+
- 7% are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
- 34% of young people are looking for work
- 33% are engaged with programs delivered by organisations
- 20% are attending high school or equivalent
- 14% of young people are attending training
- 70% face mental health challenges
- 43% have a history of drug and alcohol abuse
- 37% have experienced domestic and/or family violence





Prevalent challenges organisations are facing in the sector

A common challenge discussed by organisations was the lack of safe and affordable housing options to meet the needs of young people. This includes crisis, transitional, long-term, and supported housing options.

The growing number of young people with complex needs was another challenge for organisations. These complexities primarily involve mental health challenges, disabilities, previous trauma from domestic and family violence, and alcohol and other drug abuse.

Organisations discussed the lack of sufficient and accessible services which support young people with these complexities, such as mental health services and support due to a combination of difficulties accessing external services or a lack of trained staff internally to provide such services.

A lack of adequate and flexible funding to support young people was noted by most organisations as being a problem in the sector.

Organisations were commenting on the challenges with staff regarding their ability to effectively support young people, the high turnover of staff, and concerns over staff wellbeing and safety.

Growing rental costs, limited rentals availability and bias against young people creates significant barriers for young people to access the private rental market and subsequently places more pressure on the sector.

Challenges around NDIS and disability support stem from young people refusing to identify and engage with the NDIS, and staff being unable to navigate the NDIS.

Employment challenges commonly stem from the lack of entry points into the labour market and the absence of training and education opportunities for young people.

Key to the sector findings were

- 59% called for more housing options
- 59% called for system improvements
- 34% called for better housing models.

Inaccessible private rental market Lack of mental health services/ support
Availability of Housing and Support
Lack of NDIS/disability support Funding
Complexity of Client Need Employment Staffing





The Voices of Young People

One of our favourite things to do at QYHC is provide a safe space for young people with a lived experience to share their opinions about what is needed for homeless young people moving forward. Over the course of the last year, we have been able to do this through many avenues. With the support of the sector, we have been able to speak with a diverse group of young people from around Queensland. We had conversations with young people via Zoom for the development of our 'Youth Homelessness Matters Day' poster. It was vital for us to hear their perspectives and use their quotes for the presentation of this project. Through our connection with the sector, we were introduced to young people with a range of backgrounds and experiences that were willing to speak with us online. We were able to ask them about their support needs, what works well in accommodation and support models they have experienced and how their experience of homelessness could have been interrupted and resolved sooner. It was awesome to meet these young people and hear their views – we hope to continue to work them in the future.

"I lived in Cairns and was being told about places that weren't in Cairns. I stayed homeless because I didn't want to leave what I knew."

Young person, 2021

"We need to feel comfortable to ask the community for support and we don't because of the negative view that they have of us."

Young person, 2022

Finally, we continued to run QYHC's Young Person's Reference Group. QYHC's Young Person's Reference Group meetings provide young people with the opportunity to come together in a safe environment to discuss and share their thoughts about relevant topics. These meetings were held on a monthly basis and were attended regularly by a committed group of young people who were willing to share their views and ideas with us. The in depth feedback that they provided informed the work that we did and was continuously used in our advocacy for what is needed moving forward.

A Snapshot of the Feedback

Over the decades feedback from young people who experience homelessness and associated systems has not changed. The feedback that QYHC has received over the last year remains consistent with this. Young people's concerns are that they are heard, housed, supported and prepared for their future. The clear messages from young people are that we need to listen, respond, and support them as individuals to ensure that their holistic wellbeing needs are met – including connection, housing, education, health, employment and living skills.

"No one cared what happened to me. I went to 12 different schools, moved every few months, I had no stability and no one stayed in touch with me. No one cared."

Young person, 2022

"I don't know how to be an adult and do what they do. I am only 17"

Young person, 2021

"Safety is key, especially for young women. Placing them in a shelter with older men isn't a good idea. Housing needs to allow for young people's safety."

Young person, 2022





With regard to housing and homelessness responses, young people reported that:

Everyone's experiences are different - this needs to be acknowledged and each young person should be supported around what is going on for them.

- A continuum of care is required - support needs to be intensive, wrap around and place-based
- Stigma is experienced on so many levels
- Safety is paramount to young people but they often feel unsafe in their housing options
- There are no housing options for them and they are stuck in a system that is back logged
- They are locked out of the private rental market
- There is a lack of information about the support and services that are available
- School staff have a lack of knowledge to be able to assist
- The financial assistance that is available is not enough
- Housing and support options for First Nations young people need to be culturally safe and take into consideration the added barriers that they face

What is needed moving forward?

- The most important requirements are safety, support and access to resources
- More encouragement and belief in young people's capacity to achieve is needed
- Youth workers need to be trustworthy, knowledgeable and easy to relate to
- Schools need to do more – more information, support workers and skills development
- There needs to be better promotion of how to access information
- Mobile support is needed
- There needs to be changes to policies and procedures to enhance access
- Support needs to be practical, dependent on need, wrap around and provided on a follow up basis

"I need education around becoming an adult and how to navigate all of the systems. I need to learn how to budget, cook and clean so that I can live by myself."

Young person, 2022

"Now at 22, I still need support as I have disabilities and get stuck. It would be useful to have workers follow up as it is good to have someone to talk to and I like to improve myself and my skills."

Young person, 2022





The Integrated Framework of Housing with Support for Young People Forum

Planning for Youth Housing and Homelessness Policy and Framework began in late 2021 culminating in face to face and online Forums in June.

As part of identifying and assessing barriers affecting young people and their housing experience we facilitated sector workshops bringing together state-wide representatives across community and government agencies. The major workshop event was conducted in Brisbane in early June 2022 where QYHC (2022) undertook to test feedback on several research-identified domains including: Prevention and Early Intervention, Specialist Youth Homelessness Services (SYHS), Housing and Support Options, and Systemic Reform. Feedback included reference to existing housing and support models as well as identification of ways in which models could be tailored or redesigned to address new contexts. Discussion also focussed on the interconnectedness of housing and support services and assistance provided to young people to access the private rental market. A summary of each of the domains is provided below.



Prevention and Early Intervention

Discussion groups identified a range of prevention and early intervention strategies to safeguard young people, and their family, from experiencing homelessness. Targeted wrap-around family support was a prominent theme. Establishment of multiple connection points through which families can access outreach/in-home support with long-term follow care was affirmed. Engagement would aim to connect across different stages of lifespan development e.g. early childhood and through schooling age, to allow intensive holistic support to be enacted at the time of need (and for the time of need). Support could include case management, family mediation, and housing education, and seek to address intergenerational barriers that continue a family's (and ultimately a young person's) cycle of homelessness.



To ensure that support is provided at the earliest point of need there was recognition of the importance of school-based programs. School-based support from a trusted person, in a safe space enables young people, and their family, to build knowledge and skills and to navigate both the education and housing systems. Equipping all staff to identify the precursors to homelessness could assist in channeling young people to effective supports

at the right time e.g. 'no wrong door policy.' Endorsement of peer support models for young people was highlighted. Recognition, and expansion, of existing school-based models was affirmed. Positive feedback of past Youth Support Coordinator programs was noted and expansion of this initiative into primary school settings recommended to ensure intervention at earliest point possible. Expansion of Reconnect program was supported. The benefits of co-location of services within schools, and links to DFV services, SYHS's, refugee supports, and family support were encouraged.





Prevention and Early Intervention initiatives focused on key developmental age groups was noted alongside the importance of collaboration and continuity of support. There is a recognised need for wrap around support services for young people Under 16 years of age that necessitates government and non-government engagement. Designated supported accommodation with therapeutic support (under a two-worker model) was noted as a recognised gap in service delivery. For young people 16 years

of age and above, the importance of case coordination across services is paramount to ensure positive outcomes into adulthood. Further to this, it was emphasised that young people 25+ still need support when accessing housing. Support that continues across all forms of housing i.e. in a continuum of care, is critical in this period of adolescence into adulthood. To achieve a continuum of care there is a need for more crisis and transitional housing options, a range of support models (e.g. individual, couples, young parents, mental health), and interventions to address availability and affordability issues accessing private rental markets (e.g. models like NRAS).

Specialist Youth Homelessness Services

Recognising the prevalence of complex needs within Specialist Youth Homelessness Services there was considerable discussion focussed on developing models that cater to these identified needs. A number of key principles and support strategies were explored, including: two worker models to allow services to adequately respond to complex need and ensure safety, dedicated social housing for young people who have developed skills, Youth Foyer models adopting a Housing First approach – linking to school/work, and a concept coined 'The Mullet Model' (i.e. shelter at front – transitional units at back). Ability to tailor models was valued by the group with a desire to see more options for: young families, (that builds connection and parenting skill), young people who have experienced DFV, young people needing specialist mental health support, and an intervention targeted to those couch surfing. Recognised priorities for SYHS's were the principles of duration of need, safety, capacity to provide outreach and mobile support, and development of designed spaces to foster the feel of 'home' (i.e. including ability to entertain a friend e.g. in a garden settings etc.).

Of particular prominence was the argument for place-based responses. The geographical proximity of housing and supports was an important theme, especially noted for regional and rural areas. Regional development and responses require regional engagement. Housing must be placed near public transport with housing placements considering accessibility to family and educational networks. Important that crisis housing solutions avoid taking a young person away from close community/friendship supports. It was acknowledged schools with supported accommodation onsite or nearby assist in keeping young people engaged in education (i.e., recognising the research highlighting link between disengagement in schooling and homelessness).





A number of models/approaches were suggested for further exploration and consideration including: staged accommodation (i.e. transitioning through depending on age/need see Hervey Bay Model), corporate sponsorships, repurposing motels, social housing partnerships, and multi-purpose public housing (as used during COVID responses). Targeted community partnerships (e.g. host homes), tiny houses (i.e. as transitional housing, possibility to move with young person), and initiatives with aged care facilities (i.e. rent reduced through engagement), were also viewed as potential options.



Housing and Support Options

Discussion of challenges related to housing focussed on affordability, accessibility and on an overall lack of stock. Investment in, and allocation of social housing for young people was raised as a primary need. Eligibility criteria for social housing was considered prohibitive for young people and difficult to meet. Participants highlighted a range of barriers that young people face when trying to access government services/products including difficulty navigating forms and information, receiving correspondence (i.e. when transient), and accessing bond loans in crisis or share settings. Outreach support is crucial to overcome hesitance some young people experience in accessing Housing Service Centres.

It was acknowledged that while access to rental subsidies for young people are needed (and helpful – where housing is accessible), young people can often be overlooked for housing in community and private sectors when placed in competition against other candidates who are seen as a higher priority. Discussions acknowledged that housing market has changed dramatically in recent times and initiatives that have historically provided effective avenues for young people to transition are now less accessible. Conversations explored challenges to existing housing products including Same House/Different Landlord, which can encounter difficulties in locating one-bedroom stock, replenishing properties once transferred, and reluctance from property owners in transferring lease. Positives responses were however, articulated including reported outcomes from young people (i.e. providing stability). There was a recognised need for more community-based properties, expansion of sustaining tenancies programs, integrated support from other services post SYHS, and planned exit strategies from SYHS's to community providers.

Support options identified through the workshop focussed on health and well-being, collaboration and access to brokerage. Feedback on health and well-being support highlighted a need for greater engagement of G.P.'s and nurses in youth settings (including mental health and AOD support), MOU's with hospitals (especially where a young person could potentially exit health care services into homelessness), rehabilitation housing, and timely outreach mental health support through Headspace. Greater collaborative support was noted in the form of greater co-location of services, access to after-hours support for young people, increased mobile support, better coordinated transition planning for young people exiting statutory systems, and embedding of specialist workers in youth services (e.g. DF, parenting support). It was acknowledged that timely access to some specialist supports could be enhanced through access to flexible brokerage funding. Brokerage funds were highlighted as an important tool utilised by SYHSs to respond to specific needs, and to assist a young person to maintain, or access housing (e.g. phone, go-cards etc.).





Systemic Reform

Participants were conscious of the breadth of literature highlighting the embedded systemic barriers prevalent in society that keep young people entrenched in cycles of homelessness. These barriers exist at different levels and in different domains (e.g. society level or organisational level etc.). There was an appetite present in conversations to 'not do things because that's how they've always been done'. This was evident in discussion around systemic reform. Services advocated for opportunities to innovate. Recognising that regions are large and resources are limited unique place-based responses are necessary. Expressed in discussion was a desire for practice that is networked, collaborative, coordinated, innovative, responsive to need, built on co-design, strengths-based, and leveraged on existing assets. Services called for flexibility to identify where gaps exist and to present innovative/creative ways to bridge these. Within this model of practice organisations would report on outcomes/measures across communities. The role of government would be to 'give space, facilitate, evaluate, support and fund'. Evidence of this culture would manifest in funding flexibility where services would have freedom to direct funds and resources where organisations see they are needed most. Funding would shift from short-term competitive funding to long-term funding options where contracts are negotiated early to ensure continuity of staffing and client care. A call to increase funding to enable professional development was also advocated.

With young people at the forefront of service delivery participants highlighted a need to increase the voice of lived experience. Genuine engagement with young people with opportunity for their voice to guide practice needs to be ongoing and be embedded in co-design of housing and support models. This can only be achieved through establishing tools of evaluation that extend beyond immediate care into post support periods. The voice of young people was viewed as critical in assessing the effectiveness of service integration as agencies recognise the importance of, and need for, better connection and planning across systems; better integration and smoother transition across systems i.e. health, corrections, exiting out of home care. Engagement through interagency panels was identified as one way of ensuring integration occurs (i.e. especially when bringing together all levels of government). Lastly, reform of reporting data systems, to ensure these generate consistent and timely data, was deemed necessary. Updated training and review of data being collected was identified as key to this reform.





QYHC Chat Newsletter

Over the course of the year, we have continued to publish our monthly newsletter 'a QYHC Chat.' It is sent out widely to our subscribers and is also available on our website. This year our newsletter has provided those in the sector with a place to catch up on news that they may have missed, find out about upcoming training and events and learn about opportunities that are available for young people. Each newsletter has kicked off with an update of the big news for the month. In 2021-22, this has included events such as our End of Year Forum, Covid-19 challenges, the February floods, Youth Homelessness Matters Day and how young people fared in the state budget - just to name a few. We have also kept the sector up-to-date with current research, articles and things going on around the state for young people. Additionally, the newsletters have provided information about how to celebrate and get involved with events, how to join important campaigns, how to apply for grants/awards and how to register for a range of training opportunities. There have also been regular updates from services and promotion of workshops and groups for workers to refer young people into.

Common themes seen within QYHC Chat over 2021-22 have included:

- Young people being locked out of the private rental market
- Centrelink payments not matching rapid rent increases
- Youth Justice having wins around the state with its co-responder program
- Young people being the hope as we move forward with recognising First Nations people
- Queensland schools uniting to promote kindness and discourage bullying

We love that QYHC Chat connects workers with relevant and useful information that they may not have otherwise seen in amongst their busy work schedules. We look forward to continuing to produce it. To view our newsletters from the last year, visit www.qyhc.org.au/media.





Partnerships and Networking

A significant amount of time is spent on meeting with organisations and networking with non-government and government agencies. Below is a snapshot of our meetings over the past year:

QYHC/SYHS meetings

These meetings occur monthly or as needed to ensure organisations across Queensland are abreast of key information and have the opportunity to input into the work of QYHC on their behalf. These meetings occur either state-wide or by region.

Housing and Homelessness Peaks' Partnership

Our formalised partnership with QShelter, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland, CSIA, CHIA and CHPQ is an important collaboration, an initiative which allows for shared understanding, information exchange and joined up processes intended to ensure our combined efforts are impactful and our energies in sync.

Queensland Peaks Network (QPN)

This network is facilitated by Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOS) and brings together Queensland peak organisations to discuss issues and work together on matters that impact the community sector. This important network provides the opportunity for all the peak organisations to share thoughts and problem solve, focusing on solutions to the key issues that impact our organisations working with Queensland's most vulnerable.

Youth Justice

QYHC is a member of the Youth Justice Strategy Reference group. The reference group provides advice in relation to the Youth Justice Action Plan which identifies whole-of-government and community actions required to reduce youth offending, re-offending and remand in custody. As well as our regular meetings, this year we engaged in the Youth Justice Action Plan Policy sprint over 2 days in early November.

Youth Homelessness Matters Day National Board

QYHC is an active member of this board. This is an important undertaking for QYHC in the national arena and so necessary for on point messaging with regard to young people who are homeless or at risk.

PIF/QYHC Partnership

Our work together ensures shared understanding, enhanced relationships across sectors and avenues for additional housing for young people in regions across Queensland.





Australian Bureau of Statistics

In preparation for Census night on 10th August, we worked closely with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to ensure the most accurate count of Queensland's homeless young people. This is so important. We know homeless young people are a significant undercount in each Census. It was great to work alongside the ABS, our sector colleagues, and young people to improve the opportunities to count our homeless young people. We are eagerly awaiting the data to update our Queensland Moving Forward – All Young People Safely Housed Report with the 2021 data. We recognise that homeless young people will continue to be undercounted but between data our organisations collect, our own work and the census data, we are optimistic that we will be working with a far more accurate capture.

Foyer Community of Practice

QYHC meets with Youth Foyer providers, current and emerging. This is an ongoing collaboration of stakeholders committed to Youth Foyers and practice improvement. Logan Youth Foyer has shared many learnings with the Gold Coast and Townsville colleagues. Townsville is learning from the experiences of Logan and Gold Coast.

Homeless Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Advisory Committee

QYHC have had the opportunity throughout the year to be member of the Homeless Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Advisory Committee. The broader project, led by the DCHDE and the University of Sydney, seeks to enable person-centred emergency preparedness (P-CEP) and cross sector collaboration to reduce disaster risk in communities. QYHC contributes to this project through ensuring young people are included in the development of resources and through sector promotion of surveys, workshops and training.

Cairns Youth Housing and Homelessness Working Group

This working group brings together services and support agencies working with young people experiencing homelessness in Cairns. QYHC has been able to stay connected with regional challenges and developments through this network, and keep the members up to speed with the work that QYHC is doing state wide and the formation of the QMF Report.

Brisbane Local Level Alliance (LLA) – Responses for Young People (Domestic Violence)

The Brisbane Local Level Alliance (LLA) – Domestic Violence is a collection of services from across Brisbane who come together monthly around issues affecting children, young people and families. Member organisations are committed to collaborating to improve outcomes for families, particularly those experiencing disadvantage. Membership spans government, community and for-profit agencies across education, health, justice and the social sector. The purpose is to bring services together to identify the best collaborative, timely and appropriate responses to families with complex needs. It also aims to develop an embedded domestic violence specialist workers/knowledge in services to young people. QYHC has been part of a working group with LLA and Mind Blank Program to empower young people to build skills and promote mental well-being in schools, through workshops in the form of interactive theatre about lived experiences of domestic violence.





Logan Housing and Homelessness Network

During the year QYHC had opportunity to present QMF Report preliminary findings to the Logan Housing and Homelessness Network. Ongoing connection to networks of Housing and Homelessness services is important to QYHC and allows us to keep our ear to the ground concerning local trends and collaborative responses.

Inner Urban Youth Interagency

Over the course of 2021-22, QYHC has attended the Inner Urban Youth Interagency on a monthly basis. This meeting is facilitated by Brisbane City Council and brings together youth and community sector organisations to co-ordinate services and respond to the needs of young people. Each meeting has a guest speaker and provides a space for workers to give an update on their service and discuss trends that they are seeing. Our presence at this meeting was welcomed as so many services were facing housing as an issue with their clients. QYHC had the pleasure of presenting its mapping and modelling project in its early stages at one of these meetings as well. Information shared at these meetings is often advertised in our QYHC Chat newsletter and working relationships between services have been formed.

Brisbane South Youth Interagency

Facilitated by Brisbane City Council, the Brisbane South Youth Interagency brings youth and community sector organisations together to coordinate services and respond to the needs of young people. QYHC had the opportunity this year to connect in and present preliminary findings of the QMF Report and to build connection with local services.





Campaigns

Make Renting Fair in Queensland

QYHC has been part of a broad group of community-based organisations which launched the Make Renting Fair in Queensland campaign for progressive tenancy law reforms. Calling for support to the campaigns' seven point plan;

The Campaign Asks:

- Limit Rent Increases
- Make Bond Returns Fair
- Fairer Contract Terms
- Your Home Accessible, Safer and Healthier
- Make your home your own
- Protect Your Privacy
- Ensure you are treated with respect

Raise the Rate for Good

The campaign to Raise the Rate for Good is key to reducing poverty and inequality in Australia. The goal of this campaign is to raise Australia's social security safety net to alleviate poverty. This requires an income of at least \$70 a day.

QYHC consistently reminds government and stakeholders that poverty is the main precursor to homelessness. Income support for young people that keeps them above the poverty line is essential. QYHC is a proud supporter of the Raise the Rate for Good campaign as this is key to reducing poverty and inequality in Australia.

Raise the Age

It's well understood that children do best when they are supported, nurtured and loved. However, across Australia, children as young as 10 can be arrested by police, charged with an offence, hauled before a court and locked away in a prison. These laws are harming children at a critical time in their lives. The #RaiseTheAge campaign was born to change this.

From QYHC's perspective, offending behaviours and homelessness sit within a symptomatic continuum of structural imbalances, poverty and social disadvantage. Relevant to this is the reality that, in Australia, 1 in 8 young people are living in poverty (ACOSS) and in Queensland 83% of children in the youth justice system were known to Child Safety Services in 2014 (Atkinson, 2018).





QYHC asserts that the role for adults and systems in Australia is to pay more attention to what children and young people have to say. As an organisation we aim for the developmental needs of children and young people to be more widely recognised across our society in order that children receive the appropriate supports and interventions as they need them.

QYHC supports the call for the federal, state and territory governments to do what is right and change the laws to raise the age, so children aged 10 to 13 years are not sent to prison. Children belong in classrooms and playgrounds, not in handcuffs, courtrooms or prison cells. QYHC joins the call to #RaiseTheAge of criminal responsibility from 10 to at least 14 years old.

Call to Halve Child Poverty by 2030

Poverty affects far too many Australian children and families. As one of the wealthiest countries in the world, it's just not right that 1 in 6 of our children grow up in poverty. These were amongst the messages of the recent Anti-Poverty Week, a campaign aimed at improving community understanding of poverty and calling on collective action to eradicate it. The campaign calls upon all politicians to commit to halve child poverty by 2030.

QYHC is consistently reminding government and other stakeholders that childhood poverty is strongly connected to homelessness in later life and that if we work to prevent this, we change the course of a person's life. QYHC is strongly committed to the goals to this campaign.

Everybody's Home Campaign

Everybody's Home is a national campaign to address the housing crisis. It focuses on working together to call on Australian governments to bring balance back to the system, so that everybody has a place to call home. Building more social and affordable housing and providing immediate relief for Australians in chronic rental stress are critical steps to ensure ongoing stability and prosperity for all.

The campaign celebrated the major housing package announced in the federal budget as a landmark step towards tackling Australia's rental crisis. QYHC consistently reminds government that all young people should be safely housed and is a proud supporter of this campaign.





From the Chairperson

After many years association with the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, and now as Chair of the Management Committee for the 2021/22 year, I present this report with both gratitude for the continued exceptional work of QYHC combined with a real sense of disappointment for what could have been a genuine commitment to partnering for change.

We entered our 'Strategic Alliance' with the Department of Communities, Housing and the Digital Economy with such optimism and energy. We believed that we were walking the complex and increasingly turbulent road of ending youth homelessness in Queensland together.

What has become clear during this year, is the need for greater respect for the fundamental role of Peak Organisations in the landscape that is our community services sector. Peak bodies straddle sector engagement, consultation, and coordination. They are key capacity builders, and alongside of their members represent and advocate for their communities, while also navigating and negotiating policy and providing advice to government. Peaks are the buffer, the insulation, and the conduit that can support all parts of the system to work towards a common goal. QYHC is the epitome of this.

I am disappointed to say that the 'Strategic Alliance' has left QYHC and the sector wanting. Imagine the incredible change that would be possible with a genuine partnership? How willing are we to end homelessness? For communities to thrive, all members of the communities need to be seen, heard, valued and included. Moving forward, these observations are cause for reflection and demand a change in behaviour. A step in the right direction was our participation in the Round Table and Housing Summit, thank you to the Premier, Minister Enoch and Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy for recognising youth homelessness in the broader conversation.

To our Management Committee, I am grateful for the commitment, passion and skill that our committee has collectively invested this year to support the Coalition achieve its goals. Times such as this separate true character, and QYHC's many years of wisdom, persistence and grit will endure – it's my honour to travel this journey with you all.

QYHC set itself some ambitious goals at the end of the last year, after consolidating post pandemic. This ambition has seen QYHC undertake significant work which ensures that we continue to support our Strategic Direction, and commitment to ending youth homelessness, seeing all young people safely housed.

Thank you Fotina, Brett, Aunty Sandy, Alan, Kirstin, and Jordanah – it's been a wonderful year working alongside of you all. I continue to grow and learn because of your invaluable wisdoms you contribute to the Management Committee. Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, concerned citizens can change world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way, to our trailblazer Lorraine Dupree, our courageous Executive Director. We are grateful for your years of experience and wisdom, for your unwavering commitment to young people, for traveling the road less taken and for being downright gutsy. Thank you for showing us the way! Your continued aspiration for the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition and for being the one to step up to the more difficult conversations edges us closer to ambition as a state for our young people, who deserve much, much more than they're currently getting.

Megan Hall

Chairperson





From the Executive Director

QYHC has been having many conversations with the sector over the past couple of years and we'll continue to have them - about the issues facing young people and their changing needs. The pandemic was impactful – then the increasing homelessness issue that ensued and continues to grow – is a daily reality. The recent roundtable and Summit important steps towards solutions. Our Queensland communities now aware of the status quo for those facing homelessness, young people amongst the most marginalised. They're also the group we can most efficiently support and end homelessness, for them and their children. During the pandemic we began mapping what we have in place for young people and having conversations about what is needed for a contemporary youth housing and homelessness system responsive to the needs of young people in 2022. This became a significant piece of work culminating in the Queensland Moving Forward – All Young People Safely Housed Report.

I'd like to thank QYHC's staff – Rachael, John, Dina and Caitlin. Rachael, John and Dina began in late 2021 bringing with them a plethora of skills to bring to our work. Straight in the deep end they hit the ground running. A mixed metaphor most aptly describes the frenetic nature of the past year! I continue to assure them that things will settle down once such and such is finished, which I'm just about to stop saying as I keep being proven wrong. Caitlin joins us each year to coordinate Platform 1225. Also, a long journey for the past couple of years - event management during a pandemic, need I say more – but we got there! It's great to have a small eclectic team of committed, passionate professionals who bring such a varied skill base alongside admirable personal attributes of integrity, genuineness, dedication and honesty. They are an absolute pleasure to work with.

I'd also like to acknowledge our Management Committee members – Megan, our Chair, Fotina, our Treasurer, Brett, our Secretary and members, Aunty Sandy, Jordanah, Kirsten and Allan. Mid this Financial year they made a pretty gutsy decision to use QYHC's funds to afford us the opportunity to hire 3 part time staff to increase our capacity to undertake the work needed for moving forward. This was particularly important for the work that took much of the last half of this year, the recently announced *Towards Ending Homelessness for Young People* policy and framework. It was also important for our aforementioned work with the sector. Considerable time and energy was poured into this in order that young people and the sector were front and centre in the next steps required. Although we believe this is a solid Platform as a foundation, there is much more to build to be responsive to the holistic needs of homeless and at risk young people.

Much of our work this year has depended on working closely with the sector. They're a great group of open hearted, open minded and transparent operators. It's been easy obtaining information that sometimes organisations can be quite private about. We appreciate the trust, collegiality and good will that's been so evident throughout our projects.

We've also loved working with our young people on the QYHC Reference group as well as with many young people in organisations across the state. We really appreciate their time and energy and are conscious not to waste it or the opportunities they give us. What's consistent about what young people have told us, that we've heard over many many years is the importance of front-line staff. Positive connections with staff were more important than private bathrooms or fancy living spaces, ultimately young people need a place to call home, to be treated with respect and to be able to stay still in the same community whilst they build natural supports, attend school and prepare for their future. Everything we all do needs to support organisations, supporting those on the front line doing the work with young people to be holistically well. Helping workers in turning off the noise – how to stay present with all the competing demands – so many competing demands and needs coming at you constantly. Who we are, holding our boundaries, leading by example in our everyday moments. Being discerning, listening. It's staying still whilst young people deal with what they're going through. Most of all it's about seeing behaviours as a language. Children and young people express themselves through behaviour. Some of our young people present far younger than their chronological age.





Viewing their behaviour as our guide to what is needed matters. We know that most behaviour is trauma based and serves a purpose; our role is to unpack that with young people and respond to their trauma, not the behaviour. Even with the tiny percentage of those who commit crimes, our responses need to be trauma informed. We have reams of international research and some national that emphatically supports this stance. We need to stop problematising young people as a community and open the dialogue which includes observing behaviours in a much different way than what we do now.

Whilst life happens to all of us, many of our young people have had experiences that have come in tsunamis instead of the waves we may be accustomed to. Within the complexities of all these experiences and the impacts of trauma and the complexity of navigating complex systems when seeking support - the reality for some is the re-traumatisation by the systems we all work in. That's why policy is so important. It's why we need clear foundations/platforms from which to grow our structures. We need that both collectively across our systems and individually for ourselves and in the work we do with young people. We also need to be clear about partnerships, what they mean, our respective roles – and the time they take to build and maintain. So often we do all of this work as an add on to our work, in chaos and crisis. That's not what we need and certainly not what young people need. We need to be supported to slow down some of our processes – the establishment of programs and projects and the collaborations and partnerships needed. I don't mean have them take longer to be implemented – just to spend more time in each phase and have the resources including the person power to do so.

Partnerships can be tricky when one partner holds the purse strings. A true partnership is hard to achieve with one having such power. Government and non-government organisations in this field all need to be courageous champions in speaking out for young people and with young people when they're able.

We need time to unpack the complexities, ethical practice, sound assessment and good process. When we work together well, as is our aim, that is something to celebrate, yet working together well is a quagmire we are yet to unpack. We all know through research and anecdotal evidence we are connected and our wellbeing and that of our children, young people and families and communities is intrinsically linked to the need for connections and being in this together to achieve holistic wellbeing.

Yet we exist in a complex social, political, and economic paradigm that sometimes places our aims and intents on their head. Our job is to be solid, speak out with young people and listen to what they say. So often that is occurring at present in an ad hoc forced manner, often last minute, regularly frenetic. This is no way to consult with young people. If that is how it is going to occur, we're better off not consulting so often. Quality experiences allow for quality responses and in the hustle and bustle of everyday work, we forget that sometimes. QYHC will continue to improve on how we work with young people and the sector.

We need to be far more ambitious with policy pertaining to young people in Queensland, particularly with regard to those who are significantly compromised in their wellbeing – homeless and at-risk young people.

Lorraine Dupree

Executive Director





From the Treasurer

2021-2022 FINANCIAL YEAR

Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc. (QYHC) continues to engage in our strategic alliance with the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy.

Our income for the year was \$377,396.71, which compares to \$428,268.19 from last financial year. It is important to recognise that our expenditure this year has included remnants of our organisational resources that we were luckily able to draw on. This allowed us the ability to employ a small team of part time staff, to complete the important work to be able to respond to our government partner requirements. As a peak body we needed to invest in staffing to be able to respond to the challenges experienced in the sector, particularly as we operated with just our CEO for half the year. Looking forward, QYHC was pleased to be refunded over the next five years. However, we were disappointed that government investment in QYHC has been reduced to \$280,000 per annum over the next five years, a dramatic decrease in funding. This will significantly impact on the work that QYHC can undertake which concerns us as we face one of the worse housing crises in our history. As a management committee we find the level of funding to be completely unacceptable.

Our revenue for 2021/2022 was \$377,396.71, our total expenses were 357,623.19, leaving us a surplus of \$19,773.53. This is a marked drop from last financial year of \$50,064.36 due to revenue.

Audited Financial Statement

Our Audited Financial Statement has been prepared by Haywards Chartered Accountants who have declared that Queensland Youth Housing Coalition Inc. is in a viable financial position.

Appointment of Auditor

I propose that Hayward Chartered Accounts be appointed as the auditors for the 2020 – 2021 financial year.

I continue to feel privileged to be part of QYHC and a member of Management Committee. I would like to thank the rest of the MC and to our CEO and staff for their ongoing commitment and hard work.

Dr Fotini Hardy

Treasurer

