

# Ending Homelessness: A Five Point Plan



Australians for **Ending Homelessness**

# 1.

## A focus on early intervention and prevention programs that target family breakdown and children

One of the main causes of homelessness is family breakdown. On any given night in Australia over 105,000 people are homeless, and a quarter of these are families with children. This issue needs to be on the National Agenda, developing programs to end homelessness in all its forms in Australia.

We need:

1. Prevention programs that include employment, social inclusion, income support and housing.
2. Early intervention programs, such as specialized services that respond to those that are at risk of homelessness.
3. Partnership programs that encourage businesses and community groups to work together to address homelessness.



# 2.

## Boost support services by 40% to reduce unmet demand

Current turn away rates are 1 in 2 people each day, a figure that has remained unchanged for the last five years.

In order to allow greater access to support services and to protect against the rising rates in unemployment and housing prices, we must have more resources on the ground and the ability to use specialist services to meet demand.

Existing support services are working at capacity and demand exceeds supply. In order to address the 26% rise in children using homeless services, we need:

1. More emergency and short-term shelters to make sure all families with children have their accommodation needs met.
2. Invest more in the workforce to attract and retain a highly skilled workforce.
3. Use of specialist services where necessary i.e. health, education, training to provide customised support to meet the varying needs of homeless people.



# 3.

Annual research  
that directly  
encompasses all  
forms of  
homelessness

We need regular research that is conducted annually to gauge the number of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. This research must be relevant to homeless service providers in order to improve the quality of responses to homeless people.

We need:

1. Independent research and data collection that is evidence-based.
2. Targeted research that tracks trends and rates of use.
3. Protection of privacy of homeless people when the data is being collected.



# 4.

250,000  
additional units  
of affordable  
and supportive  
housing by 2020

In order to break the cycle of homelessness we must have greater capacity to provide shelter for both long-term and short-term situations and help people remain in their homes long-term.

- 1 in 2 adults and 2 in 3 accompanied children are turned away from a crisis service every day. To address the rising problem of unmet need, we must build more low-cost and community housing.
- 250,000 extra units of affordable and supportive housing specifically for the homeless will stimulate the economy at a time when it needs it most, by creating jobs in construction, investment in infrastructure and address homelessness at the same time.



# 5.

## Legislation that supports a unified response to homelessness and increased access to services

The Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994 is in danger of being repealed. However, Australia must maintain a national legislative framework for dealing with homelessness. In order to maintain a unified response to homelessness, we need an Act which protects against the fragmentation of this response into States and Territories.

The act must include:

1. Protection for homeless people within a national legal framework.
2. Non-discriminatory allocation of resources, access to accommodation and services that are not contingent on the ability to pay.
3. National, state and regional targets to address homelessness in all its forms.
4. Short, medium and long-term timeframes for these targets to be actioned.

