

Homelessness Quick Facts

According to the 2016 Census there were:

37,715 people experiencing homelessness in NSW

(an increase of 37% from 2011)

116,427 people experiencing homelessness in Australia

(an increase of 14% from 2011)



New South Wales- 2016 Census

- Although the most visible rough sleepers are the smallest group of homeless - in NSW only **7%** of people experiencing homelessness were *sleeping rough*.
- In NSW **16%** of people experiencing homelessness were in *crisis services* and **18%** were in *boarding houses*.
- Youth homelessness is a major issue in NSW – 1% of all people aged 19 – 24 are experiencing homelessness and the rate has increased by 45% since 2011 - compared to a 15% increase across Australia.



Housing stats

- The larger increases in NSW are due to a lack of affordable housing. Less than **1%** of *private rentals are affordable in the greater Sydney area for people on low incomes*
- There are **60,000** people on the social housing waiting list and the waiting list can be between 2 and 10 years.
- Other countries are ending homelessness – most notably Finland through Housing First – this provides permanent affordable housing with support where people need it.



A national campaign on affordable housing and homelessness was launched in March 2018 that outlines 5 ways that homelessness can be ended in Australia:

<http://everybodyshome.com.au/>

Homelessness FAQs

Do homeless people like or choose to be homeless?

No – when we surveyed over 500 people in Sydney in 2015 not one expressed a desire to stay homeless. Every one of those surveyed were living below the poverty line.

Why are people homeless?

Many different reasons, but the *lack of affordable housing* is a major driver. Many people who are homeless only require a home they can afford (eg older women). Others do require support but impossible to deliver that well if they are not housed.

Almost a third of people accessing homelessness services are *women and children escaping domestic and family violence* and this has increased by 43% since 2013/14. This increase is thought to be due to increased community awareness of the unacceptability of domestic and family violence (a good thing) combined with increased housing costs which prevent women from accessing affordable housing away from the perpetrator.

Why are young people homeless?

The main causes include: Domestic and family violence, Physical, Sexual and Emotional Abuse, Involvement with the child welfare system, Discrimination, Homophobia and Poverty combined with a lack of affordable housing.

What should I do if I come across a person who is homeless?

Firstly, do no harm. If you feel comfortable say hi, ask them if they are OK? Ask them if they are receiving support. If they are younger than 16 – contact FACS (NSW). Ask if they need something to eat.

How can I help end homelessness?

Here are four ways to help end homelessness:

1. Contact politicians to let them know that you are concerned about this issue or sign up to the Everybody's Home Campaign - <http://everybodyshome.com.au/>
2. Contact your local homelessness services and ask them what support would assist – usually financial donations are the best but they can also provide advice about what other goods might be useful
3. Be informed about the drivers of homelessness and so when housing affordability/real estate comes up in conversation with friends and family talk about how this is also impacts on poor and vulnerable people
4. Be kind to people experiencing homelessness when you come across them. Being homeless can be a lonely and isolating experience and so even a friendly wave or smile can make a big difference to someone.

For more information on homelessness stats and info go to:
<https://www.homelessnessnsw.org.au/>

Homelessness NSW

