



## **MEDIA RELEASE - MONDAY 16th MARCH**

### **New data reveals shocking shortage of youth crisis accommodation**

New data released by the **Ending Child and Youth Homelessness** coalition has revealed an acute lack of youth crisis accommodation across the Perth metropolitan area.

#### **Available Youth Crisis Beds in Perth**

- On one night in March 2026, 73 young people were sleeping rough, and only three beds available across youth accommodation crisis services (two of which were for women aged 18 and younger).
- Of the 341\* youth dedicated beds in the Perth metro area, there were no funded low threshold\*\* 24/7 support accommodation or respite night services\*\*\*.<sup>1</sup>
- The ongoing shortage in accommodation means there are less beds available than there are children and young people in need.

This new data has been provided by the coalition, which conducted an 'audit' in February 2026 on accommodation capacity to identify the biggest gaps.

#### **By Name List data**

The latest By Name List data for Perth and Rockingham as of 8 March 2026 reveals that there are currently 320 children and young people aged 16 to 25 who are homeless, 73 of whom are sleeping rough.

The top suburbs in the Perth metro area with the highest number of homeless children and young people includes:

1. Perth (75)
2. Fremantle (12) and Victoria Park (12)
3. Midland (11)
4. Armadale (5) and Ellenbrook (5)
5. Joondalup (4)

#### **Crisis accommodation services turning away thousands of requests**

New data provided for the first time by crisis accommodation services also shows frontline staff are overwhelmed with requests from young people they cannot assist.

Mission Australia's Youth Accommodation Support Services (YASS) provided accommodation for 60 young people across crisis and transitional accommodation from January to December 2025, but also reported 600 requests were made over the same period.

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<sup>1</sup> \*Gathered through voluntary youth accommodation sector survey in February 2026 and thus may not be exhaustive.

\*\*Low threshold provides safe and inclusive accommodation and support to individuals with complex needs.

\*\*\*Respite night service provides same day access and includes night accommodation and other supports



Similarly, Youth Futures, which operates 41 crisis and transitional accommodation beds across the northern metropolitan corridor, received 2,575 accommodation requests from young people who could not be assisted due to capacity constraints in 2025.

### **Urgent call for action to end child and youth homelessness**

The Ending Child and Youth Homelessness coalition, formed by peak bodies Shelter WA, WA Council of Social Service (WACOSS), Youth Affairs Council of WA (YACWA) and service providers including Vinnies WA, Mission Australia, Youth Futures, Indigo Junction, Anglicare WA, Perth Inner City Youth Service, St John of God, and the WA Alliance to End Homelessness is calling on the state government to invest \$150 million into urgently needed accommodation and prevention and early intervention initiatives.

It has released its [Ending Child & Youth Homelessness Pre-Budget Submission 2026-27](#), which asks for decisive action to:

- Urgently invest in a variety of accommodation and housing models for unaccompanied children and young people including Direct Access Crisis Housing, such as low threshold 24/7 accommodation and respite night services to ensure that no child under 18 is left without shelter.
- Expanding Youth Foyers
- More social and affordable housing with a target of 5000 each year
- Strengthening prevention and early intervention initiatives
- Increasing the capacity and coordination of the youth homelessness sector
- Ensuring the voices of young people with lived experience are embedded in policy and service design.

### **Comments attributable to Louise Giolitto, CEO WA Council of Social Service (WACOSS)**

*“This data lays bare a crisis no child should ever have to face. Young people are sleeping rough, couch surfing, or turning up at services that have no beds left.*

*“It is devastating that frontline workers are forced to turn them away because the system is stretched beyond breaking point.*

*“This is not just a homelessness issue – it is a justice issue. The State Government’s own ‘Our Priorities for Government 2025–2029’ sets out a vision that every Western Australian has a home and can access the services they need, no matter where they live.*

*“Yet while we have seen welcome investment in homelessness services in recent years, the contracting of a new system is taking far too long. In the meantime, the sector is being pushed beyond its limits, carrying the weight of supporting those who are most vulnerable and most disadvantaged – the very people our community should be protecting.*

*“We are urging the State Government to commit to adequate funding for the community services sector so that it can sustain the bare minimum of existing demand for services.*

*“No child should face the night without shelter, and no service should be forced to fundraise simply to keep young people safe – especially when the Government has made a clear commitment to ensuring every Western Australian has a home.”*

**Comments attributable to Elise Jorgensen, Homelessness Regional Leader, Mission Australia**

*“As a service provider, it’s devastating to be unable to assist so many young people when they need it most. In just twelve months, we provided accommodation to 60 young people, but received 600 requests.*

*“We’re also seeing worrying new trends, including an increasing number of admissions linked to family and domestic violence, and an increase in the number of young people experiencing acute mental health decline.*

*The good news is we know what works and we’re ready to scale up our services. We just need funding, certainly and a bold commitment from Government to end child and youth homelessness.*

**Comments attributable to Michelle Jenkins, CEO Youth Futures**

*“The community would probably be shocked to learn of the high numbers of children and young people who are sleeping rough and have nowhere to go across Perth’s northern suburbs”*

*“There are also significant bottlenecks across the youth homelessness system as young people are unable to move into stable housing. The rental crisis and severe lack of social housing availability for young people transitioning from support services is another barrier.*

*We’re calling on the WA Government to act immediately to end child and youth homelessness and guarantee their safety, success, wellbeing and empowerment”.*

**NEW YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DATA AT MARCH 2026**

**Table 1: BY NAME LIST: Young people currently active (25 and under)**

	Rough sleeping	Temporarily sheltered	Unknown	Total
Perth Zero Project	70	194	48	312
Rockingham Zero Project	3	5		8
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>320</b>

**Table 2: BY NAME LIST: Percentage of people on the List that are 25 and under**

	Total people/families on BNL	How many are young people?	% that are 25 and under
Perth Zero Project	2030	312	15.4%
Rockingham Zero Project	157	8	5.1%

Total	2187	320	
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## IMPORTANT CAVEATS ON USING BY NAME LIST DATA

**Data Quality During System Transition.** We remain in a transition period following the introduction of the new database and associated processes. Significant progress has been made thus far through a range of targeted data quality initiatives. It is essential to note, however, that this work remains ongoing. There remain a number of active measures in place to continue improving the completeness and accuracy of the data, and all data provided should continue to be interpreted with this context in mind.

**Housing Status Unknown.** Please note, as far as whether people are rough sleeping or temporarily sheltered, there is a significant number of people we do not have this information for (listed as 'unknown' in the data provided). This is because workers have not selected a housing status when activating someone on the BNL.

**Data Migration and Informed Consent.** We have migrated data from the old system into the new one. However, as with any major data transition, it would have been inappropriate and unfair to automatically activate people's records without transparency about what had changed and how their information would continue to be held and used. People are entitled to the opportunity to give informed consent to reactivate their record. We acknowledge that in some communities this requires significant effort to reconnect with individuals, and there may be many individuals who are still experiencing homelessness but have not yet been activated on the new database due to not yet having had the opportunity to give consent. However, taking a transparent and consent-based approach was the appropriate and ethical path.

**General.** The BNL is not a mandatory database for partnered organisations. Contribution is solely based on the goodwill for a collaborative approach to ending homelessness. It is also voluntary for people currently experiencing homelessness to be included on the list.

Because participation is voluntary, the figures captured in the BNL are not an exhaustive measure of homelessness. Instead, they represent the people we currently know 'by name' through services and sector collaboration.

### Key facts – Youth Homelessness:

- 830 young people are presenting alone to specialist homelessness services every day - up 17 per cent from last year and up 21 per cent five years ago
- 1400 children in families are being assisted daily by specialist homelessness services
- WA has the highest daily average of unassisted requests at 96, which is a 22 per cent increase since last year
- Children and young people aged 0 to 24 make up 56 per cent of unassisted requests in WA, compared to 44 per cent nationally.

### Definitions of sector asks:

- **Housing First for Youth (HF4Y) model** - Prioritises immediate, safe, secure and sustainable homes without preconditions or judgement, alongside tailored



youth-specialist support for young people aged 10–24 experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

- **Direct Access Crisis Housing** - Short-term emergency (crisis) accommodation providing immediate, low-barrier access for young people (aged 15–24) who are at imminent risk of or experiencing homelessness, offering safe shelter and connection to longer-term housing and supports.
- **Youth Foyer** - A transitional housing and support model for young people (aged 16–24) who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness, offering accommodation (typically up to two years or until independent housing is secured) with integrated supports in education, training, employment and independent living skills.
- **Place-Based Youth Service Hubs** - Community-led service hubs for young people (aged 10–24) that provide co-located, wrap-around supports (housing, mental health, education, employment, recreation) and essential amenities (meals, showers, social connection) within a youth-friendly, place-based environment.
- **Safe Space services** - Non-accommodation after-hours early-intervention support services for young people (aged 10–24).
- **Youth Zero Project** - Funding to support the project implementation, using the AtoZ framework to coordinate service integration, maintain a By-Name List, and drive a Housing First, data-led response to ending youth homelessness.

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