

MCM's Victorian Youth Homelessness Snapshot 2026

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melbourne city mission



Quantum
Support Services

in partnership with

sva innovators
for good



Melbourne City Mission, Quantum Support Services and Social Ventures Australia acknowledge and pay our respects to the past and present Traditional Custodians and Elders of this country on which we work.

We commit to ensuring everyone we work with is safe, empowered, supported and respected.

We support and celebrate diversity of ethnicity, culture, ability, gender, sexuality and gender identity.

We uphold the dignity of all young people experiencing homelessness, including those whose stories are represented in this snapshot.

We also honour the young people who have lost their lives this past year, including those who have died by suicide.

Artwork by Mandy Nicholson, Wurundjeri artist and Traditional Custodian.

About this snapshot

MCM's Victorian Youth Homelessness Snapshot represents, on a given day in 2026, the reality faced by young people accessing MCM's homelessness programs.

It shines a light on the interconnected experiences of young people across four areas that are often treated in silos: **family violence, health, education and employment**, and **persistent homelessness**.

A regional perspective has been introduced, with a focused look at people accessing youth homelessness crisis services in Latrobe, Gippsland. This data highlights how limited infrastructure and services impact young people's outcomes.

This annual snapshot aims to contribute towards a joined-up approach across government, the community sector, and other key sectors, to address the systemic, interdependent root causes of homelessness and improve lifelong outcomes for young people in Victoria.

Cover: Young people at MCM's Frontyard Youth Services located in Melbourne CBD.

About the data

Data was collected by frontline teams from **209 young people aged 15 to 24 years old accessing MCM and Quantum Support Services homelessness programs** in Victoria on 1 April 2026.

Of these:

- **168 young people** accessed services in the Greater Melbourne area
- **41 young people** accessed services in Latrobe, Gippsland

Programs include the state-wide specialist homelessness access point for young people Frontyard Youth Services, youth refuges, crisis accommodation, intensive case management programs, and specific refuges and crisis services for young women.

The data across both metropolitan and regional areas supports the conclusions of existing research:

Family violence leads to homelessness for young people.¹

Homelessness erodes mental health, increasing the risk of self-harm and suicide.²

Homelessness diminishes the ability to engage in study or work.³

And homelessness persists with no access to secure, supported, and affordable housing.⁴

1. See, e.g., Davidson, D. et al (2022) Young homeless people and domestic and family violence: Experiences, challenges and innovative response. Queensland University of Technology 2. See, e.g., Morgan, R. et al (2025) Home in Mind: Improving mental health support for young people experiencing homelessness. Orygen and Melbourne City Mission 3. See, e.g., Davidson, D. et al (2022) Young homeless people and domestic and family violence: Experiences, challenges and innovative response. Queensland University of Technology 4. See, e.g., Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Brief (2023) What are the real costs of the housing crisis for Australia's young people?

About the participants

The data reflects the intersectionality among young people experiencing homelessness crisis*:

- 12% identified as **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**
- 39% identified as **Culturally & Racially Marginalised**
- 16% identified as **LGBTQIA+**
- 17% of those accessing services in the Greater Melbourne area were from a **regional, rural or remote area**.

Of the 209 young people, 122 identified as female, 73 as male and 14 as trans, gender-diverse or non-binary.

*We have chosen not to report on the number of young people with disability in this snapshot. This is due to the barriers to access diagnosis and supports for young people experiencing homelessness that mean the prevalence of disability would likely be significantly underreported. †Demographic figures in this survey rely on self-identification. It is widely acknowledged in Australian demographic research that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and LGBTQIA+ individuals are frequently underrepresented in self-identified data sets due to systemic barriers to disclosure. The lower representation observed – particularly within regional cohorts – should be treated as conservative estimates. ‡This figure likely under-represents the number of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who are accessing homelessness services in the region. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth may be accessing an alternative dedicated youth homelessness point for 16-25 year olds operated by an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation.†

Self-reported demographics of those accessing services in Greater Melbourne and Latrobe

Cohort†	Greater Melbourne	Latrobe, Gippsland
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander	12%	10%‡
Culturally & Racially Marginalised	45%	12%
LGBTQIA+	17%	10%
Female	55%	73%
Male	38%	24%
Trans, gender-diverse or non-binary	8%	2%

Family violence leads to homelessness for young people

Accessing services in the Greater Melbourne Area

5 in 6 young people **grew up experiencing family violence***



Experienced family violence
Did not experience family violence

24 unknown data points

Of those young people, 2 in 3 were **known to child protection**



Known to child protection
Not known to child protection

15 unknown data points

*Proportions on this page and in the remainder of this snapshot are calculated excluding unknown data. The number of unknown data points is included for transparency.

Accessing services in Latrobe, Gippsland

3 in 4 young people **grew up experiencing family violence**



Experienced family violence
Did not experience family violence

3 unknown data points

Of those young people, 3 in 4 were **known to child protection**



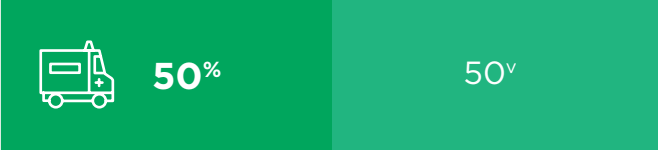
Known to child protection
Not known to child protection

No unknown data points

Homelessness erodes mental health



1 in 2 young people had **attended an emergency department for mental health concerns** at least once



Attended at least once
Did not attend an emergency department

17% attended 4 or more times

39 unknown data points

3 in 5 young people reported **self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide attempts**



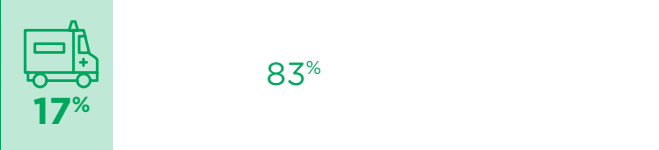
Self-harmed, ideated or attempted suicide
Did not self-harm, ideate or attempt suicide

27 unknown data points

Amongst those from a **regional, rural or remote background** who attended homelessness services in the greater Melbourne area, more than half (8 out of 15) **had accessed the emergency department.**



1 in 6 young people **had attended an emergency department for mental health concerns** at least once



Attended at least once
Did not attend an emergency department

12 unknown data points

Almost 1 in 2 young people reported **self-harm, suicidal ideation, or suicide attempts**



Self-harmed, ideated or attempted suicide
Did not self-harm, ideate or attempt suicide

2 unknown data points

Homelessness diminishes engagement in study or work

Greater Melbourne Area

2 in 3 young people are **not engaged in study or work**¹



■ Not engaged in study or work
■ Engaged in study and/or work

10 unknown data points

1 in 2 young people aged **19 or under** are not engaged in study or work



■ Not engaged in study or work
■ Engaged in study and/or work

4 unknown data points

1 Not engaged in study¹ is defined as not having attended school or further education/training in the past month. 'Not engaged in work' is defined as not currently in full-time, part-time, or casual employment.

Latrobe, Gippsland

3 in 5 young people are **not engaged in study or work**



■ Not engaged in study or work
■ Engaged in study and/or work

No unknown data points

1 in 2 young people aged **19 or under** are not engaged in study or work



■ Not engaged in study or work
■ Engaged in study and/or work

No unknown data points

Homelessness persists with no access to appropriate housing



More than 1 in 2 young people have experienced homelessness for at least two years



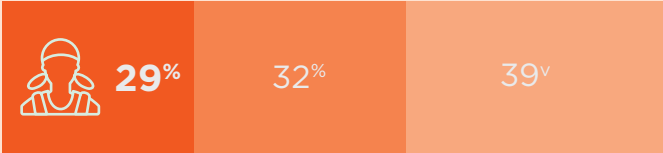
2 years or more

1 year or less

26% 4 years or more

13 unknown data points

Almost 1 in 3 young people first experienced homelessness at 16 years or under



16 years or under

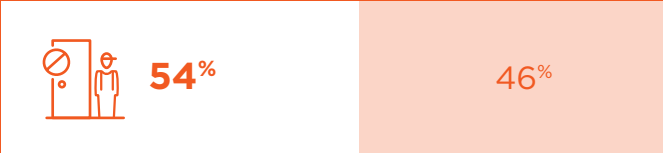
17-18 years

19 years or older

13 unknown data points



More than 1 in 2 young people have experienced homelessness for at least two years

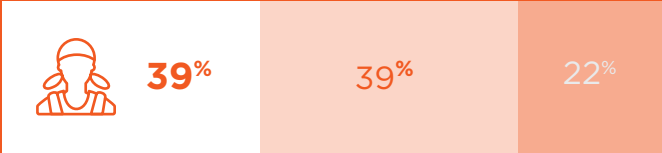


2 years or more

1 year or less

No unknown data points

2 in 5 young people first experienced homelessness at 16 years or under



16 years or under

17-18 years

19 years or older

No unknown data points

About MCM

The MCM Group brings together Melbourne City Mission, Quantum Support Services, Hester Hornbrook Academy and MCM Housing, building more connected, person-centred systems of support.

Melbourne City Mission delivers services across homelessness, disability, palliative care and education, and is a leading provider of specialist services for young people in the homelessness system.

Quantum Support Services delivers vital services across Gippsland in homelessness, family violence, youth programs and community support.

For more information, contact us:
info@mcm.org.au

About SVA

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works with partners to alleviate disadvantage – towards a society where all people and communities thrive.

SVA Consulting is Australia's leading not-for-profit consultancy. It focuses solely on social impact and work with partners to increase their capacity to create positive change. Thanks to more than 15 years of experience working with not-for-profits, government and funders, SVA has developed a deep understanding of the sector and 'what works'.

For more information, contact us:
consulting@socialventures.org.au

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The front entrance of MCM's Frontyard Youth Services located in Melbourne CBD