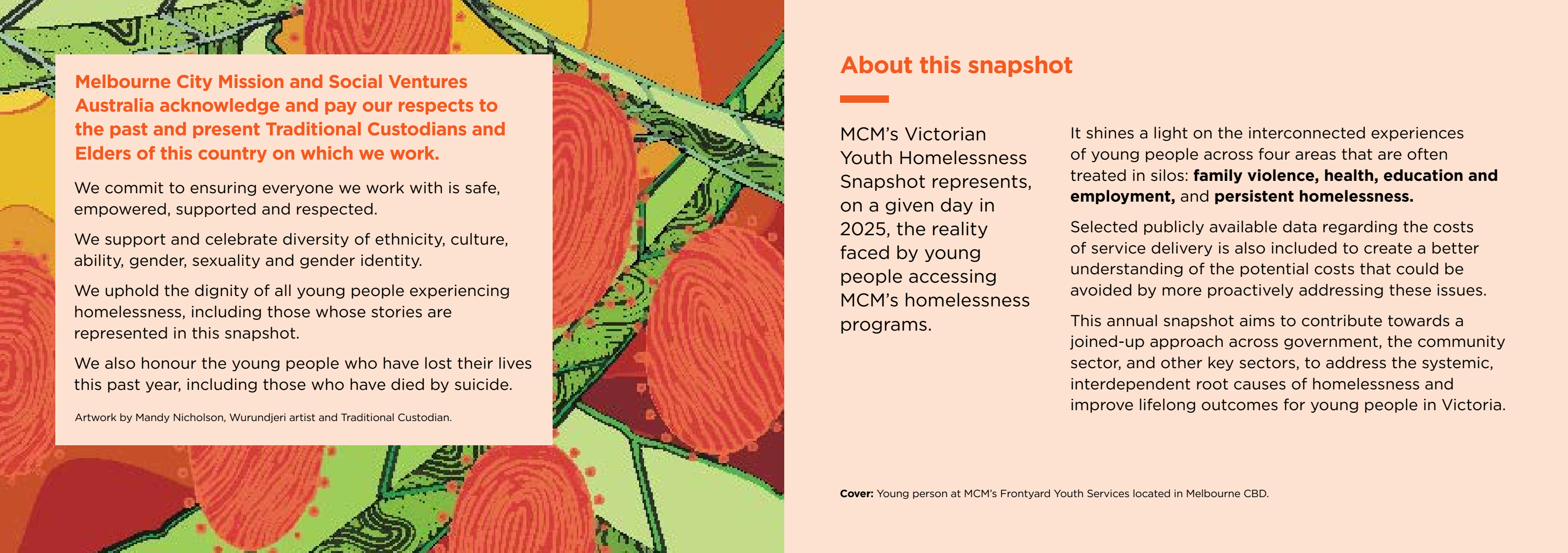


# MCM's Victorian Youth Homelessness Snapshot 2025

in partnership with

**mcm. sva** innovators  
for good



**Melbourne City Mission 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

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MCM's Victorian Youth Homelessness Snapshot represents, on a given day in 2025, 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**.

Selected publicly available data regarding the costs of service delivery is also included to create a better understanding of the potential costs that could be avoided by more proactively addressing these issues.

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 person at MCM's Frontyard Youth Services located in Melbourne CBD.

## About the data

Data was collected by frontline teams from **179 young people aged 15 to 24 years old accessing MCM's homelessness programs** in Victoria on 8 April 2025.

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

The data set reflects the intersectionality among young people experiencing homelessness crisis:<sup>1</sup>

- 13% identified as **Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander**
- 24% identified as **LGBTIQA+**
- 26% were from a **regional, rural, or remote** area
- 25% were **born outside Australia**.

Of the 179 young people, 83 identified as female, 79 as male, and 17 as trans, gender-diverse, or non-binary.

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The data supports the conclusions of existing research:

**Family violence leads to homelessness** for young people.<sup>2</sup>

**Homelessness erodes mental health, increasing the risk of self-harm** and suicide.<sup>3</sup>

**Homelessness diminishes the ability to engage in study** or work.<sup>4</sup>

And **homelessness persists with no access to secure, supported, and affordable housing**.<sup>5</sup>

1. We have chosen not to report on the number of young people with disability in this snapshot, as the barriers to access diagnosis and supports for young people experiencing homelessness mean that this would likely be significantly underreported. We have also not included the number of young people who identify as Culturally and Racially Marginalised (CARM) as we are currently evolving our approach to reporting on this aspect. 2 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. 3 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. 4 See, e.g. Brennan, N. et al (2024) *The unfair divide: Disadvantage faced by young people who are homeless - A Mission Australia Youth Survey Report*. Mission Australia. 5 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?*.

# Family violence leads to homelessness for young people

4 in 5 young people **grew up experiencing family violence**<sup>6</sup>



- Experienced family violence
- Did not experience family violence

13 unknown data points

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



- Known to child protection
- Not known to child protection

29 unknown data points

In 2023-2024, justice services in Victoria cost on average:<sup>6</sup>

**\$630 on police services** per person in the population

**\$1,059 per case heard** in the Magistrates Court in the **civil jurisdiction**

**\$1,542 per case heard** in the Magistrates Court in the **criminal jurisdiction**

6. Proportions on this page and in the remainder of this snapshot are calculated excluding unknown data. The number of unknown data points are included for transparency. 7. Source: based on SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision) data, *Report on Government Services 2025*, Tables 6A.1, 7A.31, and 7A.32.

# 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

**19% attended 4 or more times**

*28 unknown data points*

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



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

*21 unknown data points*

In addition to the two metrics highlighted on this page, 1 in 4 young people reported experiencing **chronic pain**.<sup>8</sup>

In 2022-2023, public health services in Victoria cost on average:<sup>9</sup>

**\$262 for ambulance services per person** in the population

**\$736 per person** who was treated in a **public hospital emergency department** but **not subsequently admitted**

**\$7,763 per person** who was treated in a **public hospital emergency department** and subsequently **admitted as an inpatient**.

8. Chronic pain refers to pain that persists or recurs for longer than three months. 9. Source: based on SCRGSP (2025) op.cit., Tables 11A.11, 12A.53, and 12A.55. Note that there was no data for public hospital services available for 2023-2024.

# Homelessness diminishes engagement in study or work

2 in 3 young people are **not engaged in study or work**<sup>10</sup>



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

4 unknown data points

3 in 5 young people aged **19 or under** are **not engaged in study or work**<sup>10</sup>



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

No unknown data points

The **costs of young people being disengaged** from study or work **are significant**.

**Accumulated over a lifetime**, they include **loss of wages and superannuation savings**, and **reduced quality of life** for the young person.

**For government, they lead to lower overall workforce participation**, resulting in lower tax revenues and a higher reliance on welfare and other public services.<sup>11</sup>

10. Analysis excludes the 37 young people participating in MCM's youth foyers, as active engagement in education/training or employment is an integral part of the foyer service model. 'Not engaged in study' 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. 11. See, for example, Lamb, S. and Huo, S. (2017) *Counting the costs of lost opportunity in Australian education*. Mitchell Institute report No. 02/2017.

# Homelessness persists with no access to appropriate housing

3 in 5 young people have **experienced homelessness for at least two years**<sup>12</sup>



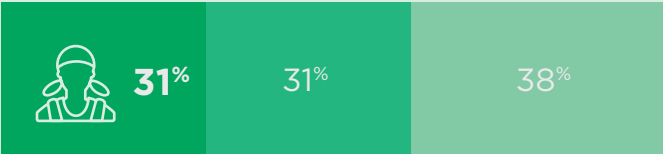
2 years or more

1 year or less

26% 4 years or more

4 unknown data points

1 in 3 young people **first experienced homelessness at 16 years or under**<sup>12</sup>



16 years or under

17-18 years

19 years or older

4 unknown data points

In 2023-2024, **government funding** for Victorian specialist homelessness services cost on average:<sup>13</sup>

**\$54 per day** of support per person

**\$5,093 in total per person** who accessed homelessness services, per episode of support.

12. This analysis excludes the 37 young people participating in MCM's youth foyers, as the foyers provide up to three years of stable accommodation. 13. Source: based on SCRGSP (2025) op.cit., Tables 19A.20 and 19A.22. These average costs likely underestimate the actual average costs of supporting young people experiencing homelessness, as young people typically require longer periods of support and a broader range of supports than adults presenting to specialist homelessness services (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2025) *Specialist homelessness services annual report 2023-24*, accessed 7 July 2025).

## About MCM

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**Melbourne City Mission (MCM)** is a leading community support organisation working alongside people to live the life they aspire to, their way, providing a broad range of support in Homelessness, Disability, Palliative Care, and Education service areas.

We are a leading provider of specialist services for young people in the homeless system, providing wraparound support so that young people can transition to independence and their positive pathways of choice.

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

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## About SVA

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**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. We focus 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, we have developed a deep understanding of the sector and 'what works'.

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



**Disclaimer:** SVA has prepared this snapshot in partnership with MCM, in good faith based on data collected by MCM and publicly available information, without conducting further detailed analysis or independent verification. SVA does not give any representation, warranty, express or implied, assurance or guarantee as to the accuracy, adequacy, completeness, currency or reliability of any of the information.





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