

# Ensuring Safety and Wellbeing of all Young People

MCM Federal Election Platform 2022



# MCM CALLS ON ALL PARTIES TO COMMIT TO THE FOLLOWING GOALS:



## **Goal 1: Young people can find a secure and affordable home**

- Build more social housing
- Tackle the youth homelessness crisis
- Increase Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA)

## **Goal 2: Young people are supported to live in dignity**

- Raise the rate of income support

## **Goal 3: Young people are kept safe and free from violence**

- Recognise young people as victim-survivors in their own right
- Increase support for young people experiencing family violence
- Develop flexible crisis accommodation options
- Ensure lived experience is central in policy and program development

## **Goal 4: Young people have the mental health supports they need**

- Ensure youth mental health services are accessible and responsive to the most disadvantaged

## **Goal 5: Young people have accessible and inclusive education**

- Increase flexible and remote learning options for school students

## **Goal 6: All young people are recognised, valued and included**

- Support fair and equal discrimination laws

## **Goal 7: Young people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else**

- Strengthen and streamline the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

## Goal 1: Young people can find a secure and affordable home

- **Build more social housing:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to begin building at least 25,000 social housing properties each year to develop a pipeline that will address waiting lists and projected demand. This must include a proportion of social housing stock allocated for young people, particularly those experiencing homelessness, to overcome barriers they face in accessing housing due to their lower earning capacity and lack of rental history.

- **Tackle the youth homelessness crisis:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to commit to the development of a National Youth Homelessness Strategy to address the key drivers of youth homelessness and recognise the distinct ways that young people engage with government services and systems. The development of this

strategy needs to be backed by investment and done in partnership with young people with lived experience, the sector and communities and must be truly intersectional. There also needs to be recognition of youth housing within any national housing strategy to ensure the housing needs of young people are met including support.

- **Increase Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA):**

The Commonwealth Government needs to increase the maximum rate of CRA by at least 50%, broadening eligibility for the payment, and ensuring that everyone who gets it is given equal treatment. This is particularly important to increase the viability of housing young people in community housing where the rent setting model results in rent below the current threshold for CRA, acting as a disincentive for community housing landlords to house young people.

## Goal 2: Young people are supported to live in dignity

- **Raise the rate of income support:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to permanently increase the base rate of Jobseeker Payment and Youth Allowance to at least \$70 a day, so every young person can cover basic living costs such as fresh food, rent and medicine. Payments need to also be indexed in line with wages as well as prices to ensure that incomes maintain pace with community living standards over time.



## Goal 3: Young people are kept safe and free from violence

- **Recognise young people as victim-survivors in their own right:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to recognise young people not just as extensions of their parents or caregivers, or 'secondary victims' of family violence, but as victim-survivors in their own right. To do this, the next National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032 needs to recognise young people's unique experiences of family violence and their support needs throughout the plan.

- **Increase support for young people experiencing family violence:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to fund targeted family violence responses for young victim-survivors across early intervention, crisis responses and recovery. To ensure young people are being appropriately supported, youth specialisation must be included in holistic service integration alongside family violence services, child protection services and other family services.



- **Develop flexible crisis accommodation options:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to invest in the development of short-term accommodation options for young victim-survivors in family violence crisis including crisis accommodation (refuge) options, particularly for young people aged 15-25. These options should be co-designed with an intersectional lens and responsive to the diverse needs of young people.

- **Ensure lived experience is central in policy and program development:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to ensure that diverse lived experiences of victim-survivor are central in policy and program development. Young people's experiences must be central in family violence narratives, and made visible to specialist family violence services, in order to support opportunities for young survivor advocates to influence policy development, service planning and practice.

### **Goal 4: Young people have the mental health supports they need**

- **Ensure youth mental health services are accessible and responsive to the most disadvantaged:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to ensure youth mental health services are adequately reaching the most disadvantaged groups particularly those with complex backgrounds such as those who are homeless or without family supports. This requires addressing structural issues and increased investment to support workforce development, better integration between social services, such



as homelessness and youth services, and the mental health system and increased access to specialist treatment and care.

### **Goal 5: Young people have accessible and inclusive education**

- **Increase flexible and remote learning options for school students:**

The Commonwealth Government can be a proud leader in providing inclusive and accessible education by building on the learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic and embed more flexible and remote learning options for students in non-government schools. This includes providing students with flexible course and learning options alongside holistic supports. In order to do this, the Commonwealth Government needs to review current funding arrangements to include remote learning opportunities for students who experience barriers to physical attendance.



This will ensure all young people will have the ability to participate and complete their education, including students who experience mental health issues that impact on their ability to learn in traditional classroom settings.

### **Goal 6: All young people are recognised, valued and included**

- **Support fair and equal discrimination laws:**

The Commonwealth Government needs to make sure that our anti-discrimination laws protect everyone, equally. It needs to ensure all young people are equally protected from discrimination, no matter

who they are, whom they love or what they believe. It must not privilege the rights and beliefs of one group over another.

### **Goal 7: Young people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else**

- **Strengthen and streamline the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS):**

The Commonwealth Government needs to strengthen and streamline NDIS processes to give people with a disability more independence and certainty. The NDIS needs to be a strong and sustainable part of the social and economic infrastructure in Australia to ensure everyone with a disability has the same opportunities as everyone else. This is especially important for disabled young people with complex needs who face socio and economic barriers including the lack of a support network.

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