



Frontyard frequently asked questions

This fact sheet has been compiled by Frontyard to assist students seeking information on housing and issues about homelessness.

This fact sheet is current as of December 2007.

What is homelessness?

There are many definitions of homelessness. Victoria's Council to Homeless Persons defines a homeless person as someone who "is without a conventional home and lacks the economic and social supports that a home normally affords. She/he is often cut off from the support of relatives and friends, she/he has few independent resources and often has no immediate means, and, in some cases, little prospect of social support."

In order to count the numbers of people who are homeless, the homeless population is characterised by three segments. They are:

1. *Primary homelessness*: people without conventional accommodation – living on the streets, in deserted buildings, in cars, under bridges, in improvised dwellings etc.
2. *Secondary homelessness*: people moving between various forms of temporary shelter, including friends, relatives, emergency accommodation and boarding houses.
3. *Tertiary homelessness*: people living in single rooms in private boarding houses on a long-term basis – without their own bathroom, kitchen or security of tenure and people living as 'marginal residents' in caravan parks where no person in the household is in full time employment and all persons are at their 'usual address'.

(Chamberlain, C & MacKenzie, D. 2001)

1. How many homeless young people are in Victoria?

In Victoria, more than 7000 young people aged 12 to 24 sleep "rough" on any given night. *

2. How many young Australians are not in full-time work or study?

There are 540,000 young Australian's not in full-time work or study. This figure is largely unchanged since the 1990's. *

3. How many young people accessed homelessness services last year?

Across Australia, 68,000 people under the age of 18 accessed homelessness services last year. Twenty per cent of these were unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver. *

4. How many young Victorian's do not complete their high school education?

26 per cent of young Victorians in government schools do not complete year 12. *

5. Is under-employment a major issue for young Australians?

Last year, 330,000 young Australian's were unemployed, working part-time but wanting more hours, or were not in the labour force but wanting work. *

The unemployment rate for 15-19 year olds not in full-time education is more than triple the adult unemployment rate. *

In some parts of Melbourne, the youth unemployment rate is as high as 30 per cent. *

6. What exactly is an 'at risk' young person?

An 'at risk' young person is someone who is currently or potentially experiencing homelessness, mental illness and/or developmental adjustment difficulties, social isolation, family breakdown, early school leaving, abuse (including: substance, physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse).

This does not exclude individual agency or service provider target group definitions and Frontyard recognises that a percentage of clients utilising their services will fall outside of the definition.

7. Why are some teenagers homeless?

There are many different reasons young people may become homeless. One of the major reasons given by young people is a breakdown of the family unit.

8. How many people do Frontyard assist annually?

Frontyard provided services to 1832 young people aged 15-25 years in the 2006-07 financial year.

9. Where does Frontyard's funding come from?

The Frontyard operating platform is largely funded by the **City of Melbourne** and **Melbourne Citymission** is the auspice agency responsible for Frontyard's operations.

The Frontyard partner services are funded independently of the operating platform.

10. Which age groups most access Frontyard?

A very small percentage of young people (0.1%) accessing Frontyard Services were aged less than 15 years.

Most young people accessing Frontyard services fall within the 18-25 age group, which is (79%) of the service users. Although a significant proportion of the client group (21%) were aged 16-25 years.

11. Which ethnic groups most access Frontyard's services?

Australian service users make up 69.5% of the service users, followed by Somalian service users at 2.5%, Sudanese at 2.4%, African at 1.9%, Aboriginal at 1.7%, Ethiopian at 1.7%, New Zealand at 1.7% and Chinese service users at 1.3%.

A few more facts...

- Nearly twice as many young people are homeless now, compared to 20 years ago. *
- Last year 56% of young people seeking Frontyard services were male and 43% were female. *
- Not all people considered homeless live on the streets. Of the total, 40% were staying with friends or relatives, 25% were staying in a supported accommodation service, 26% were staying in boarding houses and 9% were sleeping outside.

(Bureau of statistics 2006). *

* Youth homelessness varies a lot between states - for example, Victoria has a rate of 10 homeless per 1000 youths compared with 69 homeless per 1000 youths in the Northern Territory. (Bureau of statistics 2006).

References

*These statistics have been taken from Melbourne Citymission's 2007 Youth Homelessness Campaign).

These statistics have been taken from the Frontyard Youth Services 2006-2007 Annual report.

Where to find more information on homelessness

Victorian Government's Youth Homeless Action Plan

<http://hnb.dhs.vic.gov.au/ooh/ne5ninte.nsf/Home+Page/OOH-Internet~OOH-Internet-HomePage?open>

Council to Homeless Persons- fact sheets

http://www.chp.org.au/public_library/policy_homelessness.shtml

AHURI- Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute

<http://www.ahuri.edu.au>