

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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Youth Homelessness Matters

National Youth Homelessness Day - April 16

Marist180 and Yfoundations are calling for urgent national action to end youth homelessness, spotlighting the strength and resilience of young people with lived experience and exposing the systemic failures driving a growing crisis.

With youth homelessness on the rise across Australia, Marist180 hosted a community event in Western Sydney on Monday to mark Youth Homelessness Matters Day — supporting Yfoundations call for a fully funded National Child and Youth Homelessness and Housing Action Plan (NCYHHAP) that truly reflects the complexity and diversity of young people’s needs.

Hosted by Marist180 in partnership with Yfoundations, the event at Mount Druitt Community Hall brought together local young people, service providers, and community members to celebrate the resilience of youth facing homelessness—and to shine a light on the systems that too often fail to protect them.

“Young people experiencing homelessness need more than a roof over their head—they need safety, stability, privacy, and a sense of control over their lives,” said **Peter Monaghan**, CEO of Marist180. “They need access to housing that is safe and affordable, as well as services that support connection to family, education and community.”

Guest speaker **Zoë Robinson**, NSW Advocate for Children and Young People, echoed the importance of youth-informed solutions, reminding attendees that many young people are not just navigating the absence of housing—but the absence of security and support.

“Young people know what’s needed to make lasting change in their lives and communities. If we truly want to end youth homelessness, we must start by listening to them — their insights should guide the solutions we design and the policies we implement.” Ms Robinson said.

That’s a principle we live by—and one echoed by Gaige Evans, a young person in our transitional accommodation program, who shared this reflection at our Youth Homelessness Matters Day event:

“My case worker sat with me, and she listened to everything, and she would say, ‘Do you want me to listen to you or do you want a solution?’ I reckon you should say that to young people.”

In 2022–23, more than **38,000 young people aged 15–24** presented alone to homelessness services. Of those, nearly **half had a current mental health issue**, and a third had experienced **domestic or family violence**. Many were turned away due to lack of available housing and service capacity.

“Homelessness is not inevitable—it’s preventable,” said **Peter Monaghan**. “What young people need is coordinated access to accommodation, family reconciliation services, education pathways and community support. We already know what works. The challenge is delivering it at scale.”

At Marist180, we provide crisis and transitional accommodation in Mount Druitt, Hebersham, and Marayong—alongside wraparound support to help young people build the skills and connections they need to move toward independence. We also run a dedicated service supporting Aboriginal young people with culturally responsive care.

The impact of this work is best expressed by those who’ve lived it. Sophy Boylen, a young resident in one of our transitional homes in Western Sydney, shares:

“I’ve been with Marist since February 27th, 2024—just over a year now, and in that time, my life has completely transformed. When I first arrived, I was experiencing homelessness and struggling to find a sense of safety and stability. Marist gave me a lifeline—a place in a refuge where I had my own bedroom, meals provided, and most importantly, a safe space to begin healing. I completed both Year 11 and 12 through TAFE, and from there, I worked hard and was accepted into university—something I once thought was out of reach.”

Youth Homelessness Matters Day has been recognised annually since 1990 as a national campaign to raise awareness and promote sustainable, long-term solutions to child and youth homelessness.

You can support the work of Marist180 on the [NYHD website here](#)

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