

MEDIA RELEASE

16 APRIL 2018

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS MATTERS DAY

Anglicare NT and City of Darwin are presenting their annual “Couch Surfing” event in support of *Youth Homelessness Matters Day*, a national campaign that aims to raise public awareness of youth homelessness and celebrate the resilience of young people who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness in Australia. Youth Homelessness Matters Day is an important element of National Youth Week and will be held on Wednesday 18 April 2018.

The Couch Surfing event, taking place at the Civic Park Courtyard, aims to raise awareness about the issue of youth homelessness and the disproportionately high rates in the Northern Territory. Approximately 3,947 young Territorians aged between 12- 24 years are homeless, equating to 52% of our total population of homeless people (*ABS, 2012*). Most of these young people live in overcrowded accommodation or couch surf – moving from place to place without secure housing and with limited support.

Beginning in 2012, the Couch Surfing event for Youth Homelessness Matters Day has been steadily growing each year. This year, 16 teams of young people have decorated couches and are ready to battle it out in the action-packed race. headspace Darwin will be entering, along with members of the Anglicare NT youth team from Katherine, who will be contending the race for the first time. Over 20 local organisations will hold information stalls, NT Thunder will run sporting activities and Larrakia TV and Radio will broadcast live from the event. There will also be a photo booth, free barbecue and drinks.

“Youth services, schools and local organisations from Darwin, Palmerston and rural areas will come together for this exhilarating event,” said Anglicare NT CEO Dave Pugh.

“Together, we hope to raise awareness about youth homelessness and the rights all young Territorians have to a safe and stable home.”

Anglicare NT’s key messages this Youth Homelessness Matters Day are:

- Homeless young people are individuals – each person has unique needs, skills and aspirations.
- Youth homelessness is not just about rough sleeping, many young people couch surf or live in overcrowded conditions.
- Homeless young people don’t just need a roof – they need support, connections and opportunities to break the cycle of homelessness.
- Young people leaving Out of Home Care or the Youth Justice system, as well as young families have a right to safe affordable accommodation.

NOTES FOR EDITOR

Media welcome for photographs, film or audio at Civic Park Courtyard, Darwin City on Wednesday 18 April 2018. Welcome and speeches from 10.30am and Couch Surfing Races commence at 11am.

FOR COMMENTS OR INTERVIEWS

To arrange interviews with Anglicare NT CEO Dave Pugh regarding Youth Homelessness, please contact Anglicare NT Communications.

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