

## MEDIA RELEASE

**16 APRIL 2019**

### **RACING COUCHES SHINE A LIGHT ON YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

Anglicare NT and City of Darwin are hosting the annual Couch Surfing event this school holidays as a creative way to raise awareness about youth homelessness.

The Northern Territory has one of the highest rates of youth homelessness in Australia, with many young people living in overcrowded accommodation or couch surfing. Couch surfing describes people who are moving from place to place without secure housing and with limited support.

Held on National Youth Homelessness Matters Day, the Couch Surfing event involves teams of young people racing each other on couches they've decorated with bright paint and inspirational words. The couches have wheels and when raced by a group of competitive young people can move at high speed. Spectators are welcome to watch the action, take part in free activities and visit stalls promoting local organisations. Free food and drinks will be available, NT Thunder will run sporting activities and Larrakia Radio will broadcast live from the event that runs from 10am - 2pm on Wednesday 17 April at Civic Park, Darwin.

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

"We need to do more for our young people – according to the 2016 census data, the Northern Territory has 1 per cent of Australia's youth population but represents 13 percent of the nation's homeless youth."

"Together, we hope to put the spotlight on youth homelessness and advocate for the rights all young Territorians have to a safe and stable home," said Mr Pugh

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 and the Youth Justice system, and young families have a right to safe affordable accommodation.

#### **NOTES FOR EDITOR**

*Media welcome for photographs, film or audio at Civic Park, Darwin City on Wednesday 17 April 2019. 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.

#### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

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Youth  
Homelessness  
Matters  
Day