



Northern & Western Homelessness Networks

Annual Consumer System Survey

2018:

Consumer experiences of homelessness



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Background

Every year the Northern and Western Homelessness Networks survey people who have accessed homelessness assistance through the 180 homelessness programs operating in Melbourne's north and west.

This is the seventh year that the North and West Homelessness Local Area Service Networks (LASNs) have run this survey. For the first four years the consumer survey focussed on consumer experiences of the newly coordinated homelessness service system.

In the fifth year the survey was more qualitative, exploring the responses received in the previous four years.

In the sixth year the survey focussed specifically on consumers' experiences of emergency accommodation, in response to feedback received in the previous survey.

This year the survey was also primarily a qualitative survey – focussing on consumers' experiences of homelessness.

Victoria is experiencing a housing crisis - there is not enough affordable housing for everyone who needs it. The current Federal Government does not have a housing policy or minister. The Networks wanted to know what consumers would like us to advocate for to improve the situation for the increasing numbers of people who don't have a home in Melbourne.

Over 1,200 people have taken part in the seven consumer surveys and many changes have been made as a result.

The biggest one is the 'More Houses for People' advocacy campaign, which has seen hundreds of signed postcards from people experiencing homelessness sent to the Prime Minister of Australia and the Premier of Victoria.

In past surveys people have told us that a lack of affordable housing is the major issue for people experiencing homelessness. At the end of 2018 we are likely to have State and Federal elections in Victoria.

Homelessness agencies would like to work with consumers to make homelessness an issue at both elections.

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Results: Participation

174 consumers commenced the survey.

Results - Demographics:

- 68% of respondents were women.
- Nine respondents identified as LGBTI.
- 42% were single people and 43% were single parents with children.
- 40% were born overseas.
- 22% were under 25 years of age.
- 6% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.
- Over half of all respondents reported having a disability. 27% experienced two disabilities and 11% were experiencing three.

Results - Summary statistics

Table 1: Gender

	#	% of those answering
Female	107	68%
Male	51	32%
Prefer not to specify	0	
Trans	0	
Total	158	100%
Did not give an answer	16	

Table 2: Do you identify as LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer)?

	#	% of those answering
Yes	9	6%
No	138	94%
Total	147	100%
Did not give an answer	27	16% of all those participating

Table 3: Disability

	#	% those with disability	% of all participants
Intellectual	11	12%	8%6%
Physical	27	30%	16%
Mental Health	74	82%	43%
Vision	22	24%	13%
Hearing	14	16%	8%
Total	90	100%	
Two disabilities	24	27%	14%
Three disabilities	10	11%	6%
% of all participants who report a disability		52%	

Table 4: Living arrangement

	#	% of those answering	Male	Male %	Female	Female %
Lone person	62	42%	36	77%	26	27%
Couple	10	7%	4	9%	6	6%
Lone person with children under 18	66	43%	4	9%	60	62%
Couple with children	8	9%	3	6%	5	5%
Other	8	9%	3	6%	5	5%
Total	155	100%	47		97	
Did not give an answer	19	11%				

Table 5: ATSI status

	#	% of those answering
No, Neither	145	94%
Yes, Aboriginal descent	8	5%
Yes, Torres Strait Islander descent	1	0.7%
Yes, both	0	
Total	154	100%
Did not give an answer	20	11% of the total of participants

Table 6: Country of Birth

	#	% of those answering	% of Other countries
Australia	90	60%	
Other Countries	59	40%	
Africa	30		51%
Asia	6		11%
Pacific	14		24%
Europe	7		13%
Americas	1		2%
Total	59	100%	100%
Did not give an answer	25	14%	

Table 7: Age Distribution of Participants: Genders Combined

Genders Combined	#	% of those answering
<18	2	1%
18-24	33	21%
25-34	30	19%
35-44	34	22%
45-54	36	23%
55+	21	13%
Total	156	
Did not give an answer	18	% of the total sample = 10%

Figure 1: Age Distribution of Participants by genders

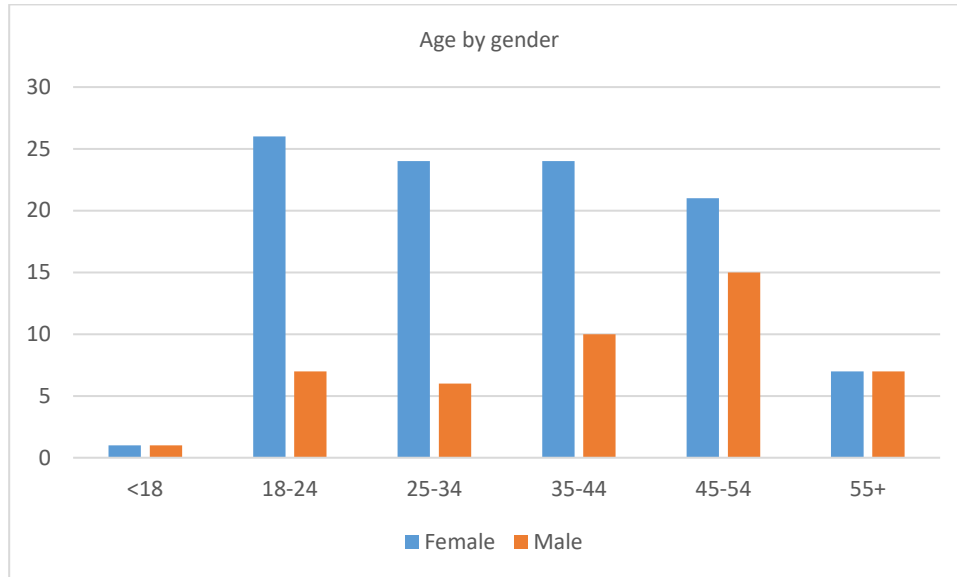


Table 8: Age Distribution of Participants: Females

Female	#	% of those answering
<18	1	1%
18-24	26	25%
25-34	24	23%
35-44	24	23%
45-54	21	20%
55+	7	6%
Total	103	100%

Table 9: Age Distribution of Participants: Males

Male	#	% of those answering
<18	1	2%
18-24	7	15%
25-34	6	13%
35-44	10	22%
45-54	15	33%
55+	7	15%
Total	46	100%

Results

Question 7: What impact has homelessness, or the risk of homelessness, had on your life (and on your children's live, if you have children)?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Stress	28
Financial stress	16
Not being able to protect children; poor diet, disrupted schooling, no schooling, no toys, scary unpredictable accommodation	24
Mental Health deterioration	10
Fear	9
Anxiety	8
Physical Health deterioration	7
Depression increased	7
Traumatic	6
Isolation	6

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Mental Health deterioration	11
Stress	8
AOD increased usage	8
Financial stress	5
Depression increased	5
Couldn't plan or organise	5
Family breakdown ; children taken into state care, partner leaving them	4
Isolation	4
Education disrupted	4
Loss of self worth, confidence	3

Stress. Difficulty sleeping. Money worries.
It made life difficult for the people I care for and my daughter being separated when we ended up homeless that it made so many of us depressed.
Devastating. Just don't know what's going on. You can make any plans because you just don't know
Very hard with children. Children need a good and safe home to live. Sharing and couch surfing is stressful on family.
Big- I was forced to give up my kids to DHHS and sleep rough and squat in derelict properties. 5 years later I am still homeless.
The ability to trust people. My safety. My mental health - depression. Isolation. Striped my confidence in life.
It lead to drug use and lost my son.

Extreme stress. Not being able to play a protective role for my children. Not feeling safe.
Not enough support at all. Prioritised means enough. Waiting around with kids and homeless. Hotel room for a few days only, very difficult when you are homeless.
Mental health and physical health has declined and I am surviving by feeding off charity support - which ca not fully provide as allocations are exhausted.
The crisis accommodation that I have been given isn't the best I struggle to get the kids to school, there is no crisis accom close to where we were living before
#Depression, fear, anxiety for myself and son. Sleeping in my car. #Lacking stable foundation. #Private rental market is discriminating against single Mothers.
Children have had to stay in emergency accommodation which was not in our preferred area. They missed out on some schooling. They were away from friends and relatives.
Developing severe anxiety because of the fear of the unknown. My children seeing me struggle to leave the house and not understanding why.
-A severe and profound effect that was traumatic, lonely and desperate. Often hopeless. A stranger in my own city. -Affected my 6 year old son (who started prep this year), he presented signs of anger, anxiety & depression, severe separatism anxiety (as I had the same), constant feeling of unpredictability & instability. Started disrespecting females because of his anger about the absence and lack of his maternal figure.
Homelessness has been traumatic and turned my life upside down.
had to live in a mouldy crowded house. It had effected my mental extremely. I felt like I had no hope.
A lot of ways Felt the lowest I've ever felt Incredibly traumatised and talking about it sometimes feels overwhelming scared of having to live on the street i was lack of motivation and i felt lonely. it had an impact on my education as i was not performing well due to the complications and all the things that was going on in my life.
hard, broken down, you are nothing
transient and feeling unsettled - very hard - not good on mental health - literally had no idea where I could go
Loss of possessions, disjointed family, disrupted education and health issues
I was in a motel for almost 7 months and had two in my care. I struggles as I had to pay towards this accommodation and I was unable to cook. The room was very crowded and this impacted on me and my children as we could establish a routine. I had to leave household goods behind and lived out a few a bags so this impacted children's education and wellbeing. I am pregnant and struggled during my pregnancy due to homelessness as the housing situation was very stressful
I have felt ashamed and embarrassed. I've tried my hardest to keep it a secret from my children but it's really hard. They think we're on holiday. I was put in a nice motel and then moved to another one because it was cheaper. I then didn't have anywhere to cook so it became really expensive for me having to buy food all the time. I was scared. I didn't know anyone.
Impacted on many aspects of my life. Caused me a lot of stress and this affected my parenting. Homelessness caused many financial issues and worrying about if I can put a roof over my kid's heads.

Question 8: How could this have been avoided?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Affordable housing	36
More homelessness support workers	12
More information on services available to help	5
Raise community awareness	4
Stop discrimination (private rental)	4
Stop putting people in rooming houses	3
Accommodation certainty	3
Better early family life	3
Stop family violence	4
Better education	2

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Affordable housing	14
Better education	5
More THMs	4
Stop using rooming houses	3
More homelessness support workers	3
Increase statutory benefits	3
More information about services available to help	3
Assistance with private rental	3
More family support	2
More support whilst in prison	2

More affordable housing options.
Need a lot more properties
By the Government providing affordable housing for people like me who are single mothers.
If someone gave me a chance.
By making Newstart something you can actually live on.
I think being aware of supports within the community not knowing you are eligible for things until after everything has happened
couldn't have been avoided However if the government had more housing options available I would not have need emergency accommodation
#More affordable properties accessible to people on government payments.
If the government did their job and made more houses or ways for young people / families to have a home instead of a stupid waiting list.
A place of my own I can pay for. Housing in private rental is too expensive
-This would have been avoided if DHS provided support instead of throwing us out of my home, where my son also resides. Since then, it's been a year of homelessness and unstable housing situation. -If my family provided shelter & support and didn't cut off ties due to my relationship. -

THE GOVERNMENT should be providing funding for public housing, affordable rental schemes, homeless support services.
police could have helped more with family violence and stalking situation
more services providing stable accommodation more emergency accommodations in preferred areas criteria of circumstances that make you eligible for emergency accommodation need to change
Having suitable places to stay with stove so I can cook for her.
cheaper rent - Fairer/less judgemental Real Estates
more housing that is affordable and fair - more mental health services for homeless young people
More housing and/or affordable housing, more assistance in housing for people with no rental history
Greater access to stable/reliable crisis services and accommodation. Larger awareness of homelessness in society.
When I was released from prison I lost my public housing. Maybe more support when I left prison.
To avoid need some more support to create job opportunities, provide some more supported accommodation and subsidised rental housing.
Could have got me a house when I got out of jail. you come from this wonderfully stable environment out to madness. Those who are experiencing mental illness are now on the streets .
More support, more money.

Question 9: How many times have you been homeless, or at risk of homelessness and for how long?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Once	41
Twice	18
4 times	5
Many times	9
3 weeks	4
2 months	5
6 months	7
1 year	9
3 years	3

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Once	13
Twice	5
3 times	5
Many times (5 – 17 times)	6
3 weeks	1
4 months	2
2 years	5
5 years	2
17 years	1

The majority who participated in the survey were experiencing homelessness for the first time and had been homeless for under a month. There were however a number of people who participated that had experienced homelessness many times (5 to 17 times) for longer periods of time up to 17 years.

Question 10: What impact has being without a suitable and affordable home had on your life?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Affects mental health (depression 15; anxiety 9)	41
Family breakdown/loss of children/loss of family/friends/relationship stress	22
Stress/worry/sleep problems	17
Worry about children	17
Financial stress/hardship	13
Unsettled/lost/don't belong/Unsure of future/instability	12
Affects physical health	10
Scared/fearful/unsafe	9
Loss of employment/can't work	9
Kids can't attend school	6
Hopeless/despair/suicidal	6
Rape/sexual assault	2
Other: Loneliness, Don't know what to do nowhere to cook, become involved in drugs, no stability, not enough food, anger, loose trust, everything, loss of confidence, shameful/feel judged, fail school	

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Affects mental health (depression 10; anxiety 6)	24
Loss of employment/can't work	12
Affects physical health	9
Unsettled/lost/don't belong/Unsure of future/instability	9
Family breakdown/loss of children/loss of family/friends/relationship stress	9
Turn to drugs/alcohol	5
Hopeless/despair/suicidal	3
Kids can't attend school	3
Loss of confidence	3
Other: Financial stress, Scared/fearful/unsafe, Shameful/feel judged, fail school	

Quotes about the impact of being without a suitable and affordable home

Constant worry, losing time chasing options, stress, sleeping problems, nightmares, financial stress, depression, panic attacks
It was just really bad and you pretty much feel lost like as if you don't belong anywhere or that no-one cares. As I used to have all doors shut on me which left me with no choices. There should be more and more accommodation out there for people, especially the ones with kids. Or kids that have special needs.
Rape, financial hardship, scared, feared, syringes everywhere, seeing people die
It's a feeling of hopelessness and despair which led to depression in all of us that one of us suicide if we were not reunited.
Huge - I got caught up with the wrong people and became involved in drugs - being homeless has ruined my life.
Loss of employment. No money. Without food.

Safety. Mental Health. No stability. Poor lifestyle.
Anger/depressions/resentment. Constantly feeling unsettled. This has affected my ability to be in the present moment with my children. Feelings of worry and anxiety about where we will live. Feeling outside of the rest of the world who have secure housing. Not being able to give my children things because I can't afford to.
Moving away from our family and friends. Not feeling safe where we were staying.
Made me reliant on Drugs (ICE) to stay awake cause Ive been taken advantage of and sexually abused touched while I have been asleep I haven't been able to be a mother to my kids/ can't see them and made me suicidal
My health has declined. Mental health decline - trust stability.
It unhealthy You worry every night while you are going to do tomorrow
It impacted on everything.
My mental health and wellbeing has been impacted a lot. I am unwell and feel disorganised, not confident and alone.
I lost my children, had to put them in care with my mother and ex mother in law
Stress, being ill most of the time, tiredness
failing year 12 due to homelessness no privacy depression anxiety centrelink pressure
I had to drop out of school Loss my job
- fearful and scared - not knowing where I am going next - no safety net
- physical illness - family breakdown - always feel depressed
A massive impact you want the best for your kids and when you can't provide a safe and affordable home for them you start judging yourself and making yourself feel smaller then you already did. It takes a toll mentally, emotionally and physically. Knowing you can't provide a roof over their heads and make them feel safe as you can't afford to give them the basics.
The impact of not being able to join in society in any meaningful, productive way. Depression. Cynicism towards society. Hopelessness.
Anxiety, depression, family breakdown, distress, unsure what happen in future
I was so stressed I couldn't eat and then I was sick and couldn't take care of my children properly. We couldn't cook and we couldn't enrol in school.
Attempted suicide, drinking heavily, unable to work, ashamed
It made it pretty well impossible to find paid employment, but I was able to manage 2 days of volunteer work a week while homeless and living in my van. It also added much stress on a day to day basis because of the instability and uncertainty of where I sleep.
My health has deteriorated also very mental health has been impacted and confidence completely shot
I am always dirty, crying & upset.
It has impacted my mental and physical wellbeing and has made me resort to using drugs to cope with my situations
I haven't had a secure home for 3 years my children have been to 4 different schools i am fed up with moving and now i need my own house and I can't get one

Question 11: What has helped you during your experience of homelessness or risk of homelessness?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Support services	71
Access point services	17
Friends and family	16
Transitional housing	7
Material aid/foodbanks/food vouchers	6
Nice people who care	5
Thinking of children	5
Personal strength	3
Other things: Centrelink payments, legal service, police, GPs/hospital, instinct to survive, place to stay, mental health service, other people who are homeless, school, hope, drugs, AOD services, religion, psychiatrist, pet	

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Support services	30
Access point services	7
Friends and family	7
Material aid/foodbanks/food vouchers	4
Nice people who care	3
GP/hospital/health service	3
Detox/rehab/AOD service	3
Others: Pet, music, transitional housing, Centrelink payment, religion, hope, showers, place to stay, mental health service, school, personal strength, being motivated to find another home	

The amazing help and patience of people around me that hardly know me
Having a worker who knows the system. Being able to get transitional housing.
Support services.
Friends and family allowed my family to live with them. The services of [access point and support service]. Centrelink income support payment.
All support workers and program supported me and linked me to support services. I met a lot of good people who listened to my problems.
The support workers that never give up.
Support workers. Organisations. Food banks etc. Family.
The instinct to survive. My children.
Friends and places like [access point service].
Support from housing worker with searching and applying for private rentals financial assistance (FVFSP)
Prison (Roof over my head) committing crime to make money to put a roof over my head/ hotel etc... Housing offices / [Access point services] emergency accommodation and living in my car
Calling [access point service] and getting updated on what is happening and who can help me.

Friends [Support service] Counselling
Knowing I have a support worker who knows me personally and helps me as much as she can. It's nice knowing someone in the housing sector genuinely cares about our situation.
Having support from support services as well as having some hope that things will one day be ok and work out. That I will hopefully have one day a house for me and my children
-My partner never leaving my side. - the few people who helped us like my grandfather, my son's father and his mum. -My pet kitten who I found as a stray in March. -My son gives me hope. -Drugs. Without substances, I would have committed suicide. It was the only way I could get up and get through the day
My support workers at [homelessness support service]. They helped me out with things like clothes, pots and pans, birthday and Christmas presents. These might seem like small things but they were really big things for me and the girls. These things brightened up our days. One time my worker gave us Easter eggs. This was our first Easter being homeless. I was wrapped.
It wasn't easy at the time but gradually once worker allocated through Transitional housing. My worker and my strength and hope that life is going to change for me in a great way
Having a place to stay
My support worker always listened and did not judge me. They always helped me when I asked for things. They helped me find a house and helped me to make sure my children go to school.
Homeless services have been the most help. AOD services also assisted.
Being able to rely on friends and family who I do not want to inconvenience or impose on
Hoping one day things might turn around.
Services for homeless people are a godsend though there are not enough to go around.
friends, family, that's about it there isn't much help out there
Good support from friends. My support worker has been helpful. I don't feel alone

Question 12: What is the most difficult thing that has happened to you (and your family) while being homeless or at risk of homelessness?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Worry about children	18
Lack of stability/sense of no future/uncertainty/lost	16
Fear/unsafe/vulnerability	13
Having no-one/isolation	13
Crisis accommodation	11
Family breakdown	6
Rape/sexual assault	5
Pregnant and homeless	5
Loss of children	5
Mental decline	4
Cold	4
Other: Getting sick, physical decline, Family separation, Stress/can't relax, Nowhere to sleep, Everything, No money, Upset/feeling discriminated against, Belongings stolen, Lack of food, Missing school/uni, Couch surfing, having nowhere and sleeping in our car	

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Being assaulted	7
Lack of stability/sense of no future/uncertainty/lost	6
Loss of children	4
Family separation	4
Physical decline/getting sick	4
Belongings stolen/robbed	4
Incarceration	3
Worrying about children	3
Turning to drugs/alcohol	3
Family/relationship stress	3
Other: Cold, Mental decline, Fear/unsafe/vulnerable, No money, Having no-one/isolation, Sleeping in a car, Suicidal, Lack of food, Everything, Missing School/uni.	

The worst thing was having no-one around and no-one out there to help you, as many out there just turn their back and don't realise what others are going through. So in the end this experience has affected me mentally and physically as well as my daughter. No-one out there should face or deserve to face homelessness.

RAPE

The most difficult thing that has happened to me was not knowing where my children would go to sleep.

I just couldn't see a future. Just not knowing what's going on. Promises of getting a safe place and it doesn't happen because all the services end up with nowhere to house you.

Being scared of what people are going to do. Being vulnerable and afraid.

Being separated from husband and children. Friend I was living with placed restriction on when I can stay in the house. I had to leave in the morning and return at 6pm. During this time I went to shops, library to keep busy. It was very stressful because I couldn't relax.
Being assaulted. Being in fights. Using drugs. Losing my health.
I got sexually assaulted being homeless, then put in a hostel for men and women and got raped.
Worrying about where I was going to sleep with the children to be safe. Not having any money, limited food options due to staying in motels with no cooking appliances. Going back to the perpetrator due to feeling unsafe at the motel where there were needles, violence, rats and drugs. Bed bugs.
Arguments/ fights with my parents.
It's not difficult - it's degrading, humiliating etc
Homeless and pregnant. Family violence. No family support.
Pregnant and abortion while homeless, due to an assault.
Feeling unsure of what will happen to us. Having to use a bucket as a toilet during the night as we didn't have a toilet in our room.
Not being able to have somewhere I could call home. Family members have nowhere to visit us. Not having my grandchildren around.
I've lost hope. Every day I feel no-one cares.
Feeling scared and unsafe in crisis accom and having no other options
Sleeping in my car at night in the cold and alone
Domestic violence. Not having a home for me and my son. Living in fear.
Nowhere to go. Hopeless. Helpless
At [the motel] - gunmen burst into room mistaken identity of deceased girl that had stayed in room before me
Trying to get my stuff around, transport. It was heartbreaking to see my little girl have to carry her suitcase around. Not knowing when we can eat again was also really difficult. Also, some of the hotels we stayed at were very scary and we felt so unsafe. I was hugging them all night ring awake because the neighbours were screaming and drinking all night.
Just being homeless missing out of university and school for two months. Also going back was hard to cover all the content that I haven't studied. Sharing one bed room with my 3 siblings at the motel was hard. Not being able to do things like going out was hard as we didn't had money and also purchasing food. We lived in a really hard situation that time
The hardest part for me was my kids not having a safe and stable affordable place to call home.
Loss of employment. Breakdown of family relationships.
Bashed. Stolen from. Stood over for money.
Separation from family and supports
Little sleep. Crime.
Multiple counts of assault and loss of family
Waiting to end my life
Most difficult thing was the instability, the not knowing. if I would be asked to move on by police, or if someone would try to break in to the van at night while I slept, or if I got sick, what would I do?
I think a lot and sometimes feel depressed. I do not have access to many things that can stop me from thinking
family issues, relationships issues, issues with seeing your children without a safe and secure space, mental health issues
Spending Christmas at someone else's house

Question 13: Imagine you are now sitting with the Prime Minister of Australia or the Premier of Victoria – what would you tell them about the experience of homelessness or risk of homelessness?

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
Build/create more housing (affordable/social)	48
Build your understanding of the reality of homelessness	24
Help people who are homeless/your citizens	10
Fund more support services	5
Provide a liveable income	3
Fix the housing market	3
Other: More services for young people, Create more jobs, More crisis accommodation near services, Clean and safe services open 24 hours.	

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
Build your understanding of the reality of homelessness	23
Build/create more housing (affordable/social)	14
Fund more support services	5
Help people who are homeless/your citizens	5
More crisis accommodation near services	3
Other: Fix rooming houses, Open up vacant properties, More stock like transitional housing, Create more jobs.	

Housing prices are out of control, has been for over a decade. Even basics in life (e.g. food, groceries, public transport, electricity/gas prices) are way more expensive than other 1st world countries. When found with a reduced income this makes like almost impossible to live as a normal person.
I can write a book but need housing
The worst situation you would experience except illness is not to have a shelter for you and your family. We need more organisations that can help these people in need.
It is ridiculous how the rental market is and we should have affordable housing.
They need to get off their backsides and do something about it. Provide more housing. So many ministry houses seem vacant - system's not run well.
To have a real look at how bad the situation has become with homelessness.
Australia is a big country with not enough housing. Please provide more stable and affordable housing for people. This can include OoH, community housing or private rental.
Need to look after the people - low income people. Living costs are expensive. We need houses. Look after the children/education/wellbeing. Need to be in touch with homelessness and give more support.
How would you like to be homeless for 5 years without your kids?
Homelessness is not only not having a roof over your head but it has a big impact on your mental status because you felt like you are not equal to other people. You are at the bottom of society.

That it is horrible and we need more houses.
It can be avoided - please help!
Homelessness is something that nobody should experience and when it happens, it can be unexpected and there is not enough support for people in need. Housing is an entitlement, not a dream.
Every human being, no matter race, colour, have a heart and soul. Every single person has a story. We don't become homeless because we want to. I had a house, car, worked until my partner's suicide. Now nothing.
It's frustrating, it's depressing, it's demoralising and just makes my health issues worse.
I would like him to stay a night where they are asking my kids and myself to stay. And then ask would he want himself or his family to stay in these conditions. I don't think he would stay a night
It was the hardest time I have been through in my life and should be more support and help for people that find themselves in this situation, it could happen to anyone.
We need more housing. More, larger, affordable housing in our area.
It is not fair my son and I are homeless. We need a house. My son deserves to be safe.
When you are homeless you never feel safe, who will hit you or where you are. When you have a government house, you feel safe even if you have no food.
There needs to be more public housing or other affordable options. We need more choice about where we want to live
Families experiencing homelessness need more help so their children are not homeless too.
Build more houses and create new jobs so people are kept busy and engage in beneficial things for themselves and also the community
We needed more crises accommodation and places that homeless people can go. There also needs to be more public housing or affordable housing. As private rental is the only option for low income earners and sometimes it's just not possible to survive on little income from centrelink and then have to pay most of my income on rent.
I have had a bad experience while being homeless and i would like to urge you that, people need home to call their own and they are facing difficulties because there is not enough houses in Melbourne. We are facing difficulties in homelessness because there is no enough houses to be provided to us that's why it takes ages to find something.
There needs to be more housing for young people
Being homeless is very stressful and it is no good for children and families to be without a safe place I want them imagine how they would deal with this situation and what they would say to their children
Absolutely horrific and there are no words that can describe it. I can understand now why so many people just give up, it's so sad. It could so easily be resolved - just buy some more houses, there are so many vacant properties and buildings, why can't these be donated or bought. These places could house so many people. It is so cold at night time and there are so many people doing it, it's unbelievable.
Fix the cause of homelessness, not just band aid solutions. Affordable accommodation, affordable services, not a one size fits all approach
That the despair and loneliness that you encounter is second to none. I would need much more space and time to explain to them exactly how they need to distribute funds to the right facilities.
There are numerous empty dwellings and an over abundance of new units being built. Mainly investors sitting on the properties. Create some discussion in Parliament in relation to this - also squatter's rights.

It's a very lonely place to be. The feeling of helplessness can be very depressing. Crime was my only financial option.

It sucks! We need help. We are human and we deserve it just like everyone else.

It's not fair for kids too ever feel this pressure. They shouldn't have to ever feel a doubt about a roof over their head or a meal in their stomach. They should be worried about kid things

You need to give more help. I lost my job because of my health and now I am losing my home because I don't have enough money. Rent is too high and my Centrelink doesn't cover all my costs

The Government needs to be smarter with their money to help people on the streets.

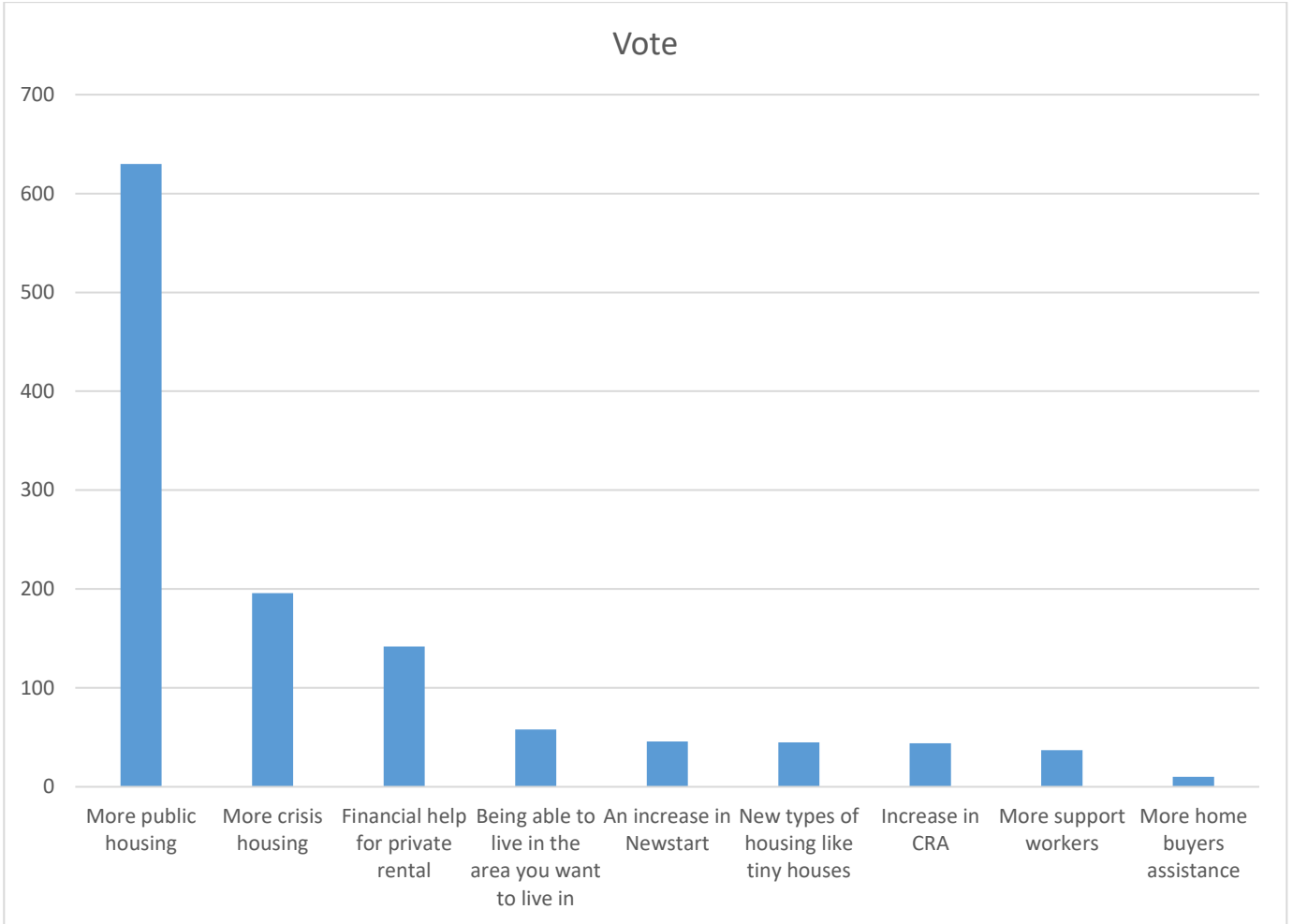
Everyone deserves a place to call home.

I wouldn't wish the feeling on my worst enemy.

How can I get a job if I cannot go to school and cannot have a safe home.

Question 14: Rank your three top priorities for things that might help.

Figure 2: Rank of top three priorities for things that might help



Question 15: Please provide any other suggestions that you have.

Themes: Women

Theme	Number
More affordable housing	16
More support	5
Increase statutory benefits	4
Tiny houses/cabins/ self contained	3
Look after Australian citizens as a priority	2
Easier access to private rental	2
Better communication about what support is available	1
Friendships	

Themes: Men

Theme	Number
More affordable housing	5
More THMS/ more crisis facilities	5
More support workers	5
Look after Australian citizens as a priority	2
More support for children	1
Easier access to private rental	2
Safe rooming houses	1
More coordinated services SHS/MH	1

More affordable houses
Definitely a rise in Newstart and Rent Assistance, even marginally. More and better paid support and social workers and services. Tiny Houses are a great idea
My support worker always listened and did not judge me. They always helped me when I asked for things. They helped me find a house and helped me to make sure my children go to school.
Having housing is essential there is not enough public housing / crisis housing
Look after Australian citizens first
Real estates that are a little more lenient to people with no rental history
Safe boarding houses that are maintained.
A need for better communication between the support workers and what can be provided. Dissemination of information. Training for Centrelink employees. Make it easier for people to apply for help. Simplify application forms.
more self-contained accom. for struggling people.
Being linked in with social support and mental health services, although even these services don't have much understanding about homelessness
More and better paid support and social workers and services.
Resilient; resourceful; positive friendship