

International Day of Families

MEDIA RELEASE -

North and West Regional Children's Resource Program

This year's observance of the International Day of Families focuses on the role of families and family-oriented policies in promoting education and overall well-being children.

Homelessness and family violence affects Children and young people in many ways, including severely impacting their experience of education.

The financial costs associated with education also means that many children are not able to fully participate in education and often self exclude, limiting their future vocational opportunities.

AIHW 2015- 2016 Statistics

Children and young people are one of the largest cohorts of people accessing Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS)

Children under 18 accessing SHS - 3 in every 10 - 79,000 clients



Children under 10 accessing SHS - 1 in 6 - 46,000 clients



Family Type of those that accessed SHS services



1 parent with children (34%)

lone person (29%)

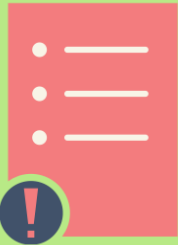
couple with children (13%) other (24%)

Engagement with Education

54% or over 45,000 of young people aged 5-24 were enrolled in education.

16% of clients aged 5-14 (about 5,000) were not enrolled in education—1 in 7 (15%) children aged 6 were not in school.

30% of clients aged 15-24 were not in some form of education or employment.



A report into Homeless Children's Education 'How High Can We Go' (2011), found that 59% of children had attended more than three schools and 15% of children attended six schools, a change of more than one school a year.



North and West LASN annual consumer feedback Survey 2016 asked parents about the impact homelessness has had on their children.

Overwhelmingly parents reported that being homeless had impacted on their children's wellbeing

"...not having a stable home moving around does not allow them to productively participate in school..."

"...I'm trying to avoid being homeless, being homeless can have a big impact to child (sic), they might be scared, embarrassed ashamed of their situation"

"children became unsettled. School work interrupted, loss of friends and community support"

"uncertainty, they are really young asking where are we staying tonight? Trying to keep them safe. i worried a lot about my children. usual routine of parenting gone, their familiar things have gone - a lot of loss - eg toys, bed times muddled up, eat out a lot...."

"he complains that he is alone he doesn't have any friends and it has become hard to make friends because he may be uprooted once again"



They also had some suggestions for how their children could be best supported by the system



"material aid for the kids"

"encourage workers to train in supporting children"

"having someone check in with the children and ensure their needs are met as well as access to supports meeting their developing need as a child in crisis"

"treat them equally, give them some assurance that they are safe"

For further information and support on how to work with children experiencing homelessness or family violence please contact the North and West Children's Resource Program

www.homelesskidscount.org

