

# Homelessness

On any given night, over 105,000 Australians are homeless. This includes people experiencing primary homelessness, referring to those who must sleep outdoors, in parks or in make-shift structures – rough sleepers. Secondary homelessness includes people who move between temporary places, staying with friends, relatives or in crisis accommodation. Tertiary homelessness refers to people living in rooming or boarding houses or any other accommodation that is considered below basic community standards.

## Stats and issues:

- Over 13,300 West Australians are homeless on any given night. Of these, approximately 2,392 sleep rough.<sup>i</sup>
- From 2008-2009, 19,900 people sought help from homelessness services (formerly) Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) providers in WA. This included 11,100 clients with 8,800 accompanying children.<sup>ii</sup>
- People who sought SAAP services in 2008-2009 gave a variety of reasons for seeking crisis accommodation including domestic violence (29%), financial difficulties (11%), family breakdown (8%), emergency/previous accommodation ended (7%), and needing time out from family or other situations (6.3%). Other reasons given were substance abuse, health issues, overcrowding and sexual abuse.<sup>iii</sup>
- Indigenous people experience homelessness at a higher rate than non-Indigenous people (1.9% of Indigenous population are homeless compared to 0.5% of the non-Indigenous population). In 2006, 1,496 Indigenous people in WA experienced homelessness. The majority of these were secondary homeless, which includes residing in crisis accommodation and staying with friends or relatives.<sup>iv</sup>
- In 2006, 62% of homeless people in WA were aged 34 or younger with a significant number (32%) aged 12 to 18 years. Nine per cent were children under 12 years who were with either one or both parents.<sup>v</sup>
- In 2009, the Commonwealth government announced the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA). The NAHA is supported by the National Partnership Agreements on social housing, homelessness and Indigenous Australians living in remote areas. It will provide \$6.2 billion worth of housing assistance to low and middle income Australians in the first five years.

## Resources and links:

- Directory of WA accommodation and homelessness services:  
<http://www.community.wa.gov.au/DCP/Resources/Accommodation/Accommodation+and+Homelessness+Services/>
- Homelessness Australia [www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au](http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au)
- Australian National Homelessness Research <http://www.homelessnessinfo.net.au>
- National Homelessness Information Clearinghouse <http://www.homelessnessinfo.net.au>
- If you are homeless or at risk of homelessness and require support, please contact the following agencies:

Homeless Advisory Service	1800 065 892
Crisis Care	9223 1111 or 1800 199 008
Salvation Army Careline	9442 5777
The Ruah Centre	9328 7682

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<sup>i</sup> AIHW (2009) Indigenous housing needs 2009: a multi-measure needs model. Cat. no. HOU 214. Canberra: AIHW.

<sup>ii</sup> AIHW (2010) Government-funded specialist homelessness services: SAAP National Data Collection annual report 2008–09 Western Australia supplementary tables. Cat. no. HOU 226. Canberra: AIHW.

<sup>iii</sup> AIHW (2010)

<sup>iv</sup> AIHW (2009)

<sup>v</sup> Government of WA, Department of Child Protective Services (2009) Homelessness WA Implementation Plan.