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Shepparton Youth Foyer welcomes 200th resident

Shepparton Education First Youth Foyer has welcomed its 200th resident since its opening in 2016.

Nikayla Moss, 20, moved into The Foyer in Fryer Street earlier this year.

The youth accommodation residence, managed by BeyondHousing and Berry Street, provides opportunities for young people aged 16 to 24 to develop skills necessary to build independence and stability.

Nikayla said she was enjoying living independently, in a safe secure environment.

"Finally having my own space and the support these guys give me, and everyone who lives here, it's changed my life. I can commit to my studies and working, and I am getting my hairdressing apprenticeship"

The Foyer supports young people who are unable to live at home or do not have a stable place to live to achieve their education goals. Young people live in safe, secure accommodation while they study, as well as receiving other support and building skills to become independent adults.

Nikayla was the 200th resident to move into the complex which provides self-contained units for up to 40 young people.

Nikayla celebrated the milestone with fellow residents, who live in the foyer for up to 2 years whilst studying and gaining valuable work experience. Residents also gain critical life skills and importantly, skills that will ensure they can find and maintain a home of their own and avoid the risk of homelessness in the future.

Nikayla is currently study at GOTAFE and undertaking her apprenticeship in hairdressing with Bright Eyes salon

BeyondHousing Student Residency Officer Cinnamon Brauman said it was exciting to celebrate the 200th milestone.

"We've had really great results with our residents transitioning into the private rental market and achieving their goals in housing, employment and education," she said.

"Residents can stay for up to two years but often see a readiness to move on to renting their own home and independent living at around the 12-to-18-month mark."

Berry Street Senior Manager, Shepparton Youth Foyer and Better Futures Anita McCurdy said it was important to recognise what so many young people had achieved both during and after their time at the foyer.



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“Since opening the youth foyer nearly 6 years ago we always celebrated with all students the successes and what this fantastic housing and support initiative that the Education First Youth Foyers offers.

“It has been an amazing privilege to be part of this journey in building the team culture around our Advantage Thinking model and seeing so many great outcomes with young people that otherwise would be struggling in seeking somewhere safe and stable to live.

To reach 200 students has been a significant milestone and we couldn't be prouder of what all those students have achieved during and after their time in the program”, Ms McCurdy said.

On any given night in Australia, 27,680 young people aged between 12-24 are homeless, according to the 2016 Census. More than half are living in severely crowded dwellings, about 18 per cent are in supported accommodation, and 9 per cent are in boarding houses.

BeyondHousing data revealed 1 in 5 people that sought help from their homelessness services in Shepparton last year was a young person under 25 years.

BeyondHousing CEO Celia Adams said when people think about youth homelessness, they often picture kids living on the street but in reality, most homelessness is hidden.

“For most young people homelessness is linked to housing that's unstable, unsafe, overcrowded and in many cases short-term like couch surfing.”

Ms Adams said the Shepparton Education First Youth Foyer was an excellent example of how community housing for a larger number of residents, in a great CBD location can benefit both those that live in the housing complex and their community.

“The achievements of some of the past residents of The Foyer include becoming first homeowners, running their own businesses, and giving back to the Shepparton community through mentoring other young people.

“It really does show the difference that great housing, with support and pathways to education and work, can make for young people.

“There is a real community environment created amongst the 40 residents, who share similar experiences but also the aspirations to succeed in their studies, their careers, their housing and across all aspects of their lives.

“Because of the scale of a service like Shepparton Education First Youth Foyer, we have an incredible opportunity here, and as a community, to be involved in hundreds of young people's lives and supporting them to change their future and to be successful, engaged members of our regional city.”

- ENDS -

**Pseudonym used to protect privacy.*

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About:

BeyondHousing is the largest community housing organisation within the Goulburn and Ovens Murray regions of Victoria. BeyondHousing is the main entry point for the homelessness system and provides a range of supports for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Berry Street has provided services to children, young people, and families for over 140 years. Today we are one of Australia's largest independent family service organisations.

For more information or to arrange an interview, contact: Chelsea McGrath on 0432 179 178