



North West Youth
Accommodation Service Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-2013

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Funded by



Queensland
Government



- This is a true and accurate record of the AGM held on the 1st November 2012

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I have been involved with North West Youth Accommodation Service Inc. (NWYAS) since 1990. Each and every year since has seen significant achievements.

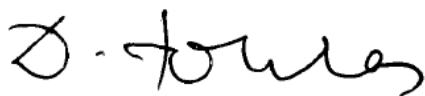
NWYAS Inc. accepts a housing first philosophy when dealing with homeless young people and those at risk of homelessness. However, research clearly shows the necessity for supported accommodation services as this is the most cost effective way of responding to youth homelessness.

The Staff and Management Committee have a passionate commitment to helping young people to navigate the difficult pathways to independent accommodation. The early ending of young people's homelessness is essential to overcome the complex problems and trauma associated with long term homelessness.

It has been a pleasure to be involved with a Management Committee who has worked so collaboratively to support our Manager, Tanya, and her capable staff to achieve the excellent outcomes outlined in this report.

Finally, I would like to thank the Commonwealth and State Governments for their financial support and to welcome the decision by the Queensland Government to put housing and homeless services under one portfolio.

Specialist Homelessness Services are aware that the Hon. Minister, Tim Mander, is seeking the continuation of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness beyond the end of this financial year. Without funding provided by this program NWYAS Inc. could not maintain its current level of service.



Jim Fouras
PRESIDENT

TREASURER'S REPORT

North West Youth Accommodation Service Inc. continues to underpin quality delivery of services to clients with sound financial management practices.

With continued support from the Queensland Government, in addition to small grants and donations, NWYAS Inc. manages to maintain a stable financial position without compromising our focus on client need.

We have experienced a steady increase in rental income as a result of improvements in our tenancy management processes, and the integration of support and property management enabling us to sustain tenancies.

Improvements to the properties have been undertaken this year, and the steady rise of the cost of delivering services continues to impact on our budget. However, we make adjustments as necessary to ensure our ongoing viability.



Holly-Emma Moulds
TREASURER

MANAGER'S REPORT

The process of reform of the Homelessness Service System which began last year has continued into this year. At the Federal level, we continue to wait for information as to whether the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness will be renewed beyond the Transitional Agreement ending in June 2014. At the State level, the "Youth Re commissioning" process has created some level of uncertainty for homelessness and youth services alike.

Specialist Homelessness Services have shifted portfolios to the Department of Housing and Public Works from the Department of Communities, Child Safety & Disability Services QLD. Whilst we enjoyed a positive relationship with the Department of Communities over a number of years, the bringing together of Homelessness responsibilities within the same portfolio as Housing services will hopefully mean a service system that is integrated to respond well to both homeless young people, and those experiencing housing stress.

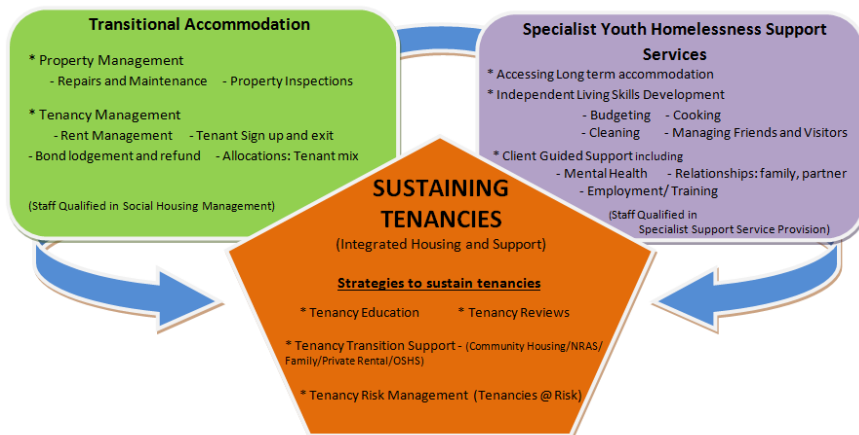
At the organizational level, North West Youth Accommodation Service (NWyAS) Inc. has this year participated in activities with the specific focus of improving coordinated and collaborative responses to young people who are homeless or in need of affordable housing.

We have continued our participation in the Homelessness Community Action Plan (HCAP) Outer North Case Coordination Meeting, which has produced positive results for individuals who are clients of NWyAS Inc. Our involvement in this activity has also strengthened our working relationship with a range of services in the Outer Northern suburbs of Brisbane.

Since late 2012, we have been one of seven organisations that undertook to explore the possibilities of a collaborative way of working together with a view to improve our collective viability whilst continuing to provide local services responses within our communities. What has become known as the Youth Services Collaboration Project (YSCP) has required all participating services to invest time and energy in a process of collaboration – one which we are anticipating will see positive results for young people across the Greater Brisbane region.

At the service delivery level, the staff team have worked consistently this year towards ensuring that our practice with young people is effective, ethical and reflects best practice guidelines in our field. We have undertaken a number of team and professional development activities aimed at informing and developing our delivery of services to young people. Amovita Consulting delivered two practice review workshops to assist us to further develop strategies for responding to Domestic Violence and to ensure that we draw on an ethical decision making framework when dealing with difficult decisions in our practice. The National Homelessness Conference in Melbourne was an opportunity to be inspired by the work of others in the homelessness space both internationally, and across Australia.

Many of the learnings over the last few years have culminated this year in NWWYAS Inc. articulating its service delivery model. In an environment where the results of the work of Specialist Homelessness Services are becoming increasingly examined, the ability to convey the “what” and “how” of our work is essential. This model of service delivery is unique to NWWYAS Inc. and is the foundation of the organisation’s success in supporting young people as they make the transition to increased independence in their lives.



As always, the Management Committee and staff team are to be commended on their commitment to the work of the organisation.

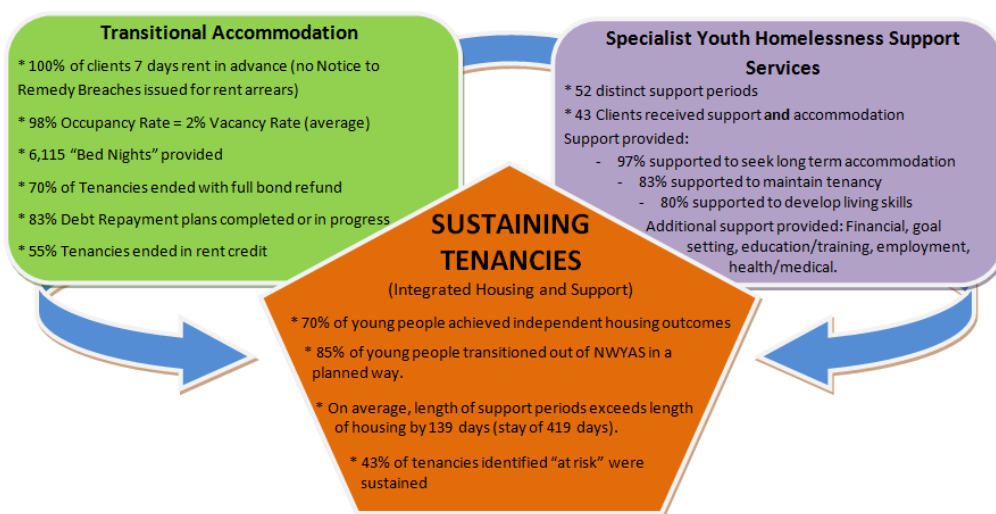
We are fortunate to have a diverse membership on our Management Committee, bringing with them a range of skills in governance, finance, community based service delivery and business practices. Equally valuable is their cohesive, diligent and focused pursuit of the aims and objects of the association. We are fortunate to have a committee that is so skilled and aligned to the purpose of the organization, and I thank them sincerely for all of the time and energy that they give.

2012-2013 Staff Team



(Suzie Dennis absent)

The day to day work of a Specialist Homelessness Service can be challenging and confronting, refreshing and inspiring. I am thankful to share that work with a highly skilled staff team who do not shy away from the tough stuff and who constantly push themselves to reflect on their work and our response to our client group. This has resulted in many individual achievements for both staff, and the young people that benefit from their professionalism. The 2013 Service User Feedback Survey results reflect the compassionate and professional way in which the staff team undertake their work with our clients, and I am immensely proud of the combined outcomes achieved by the team this year.

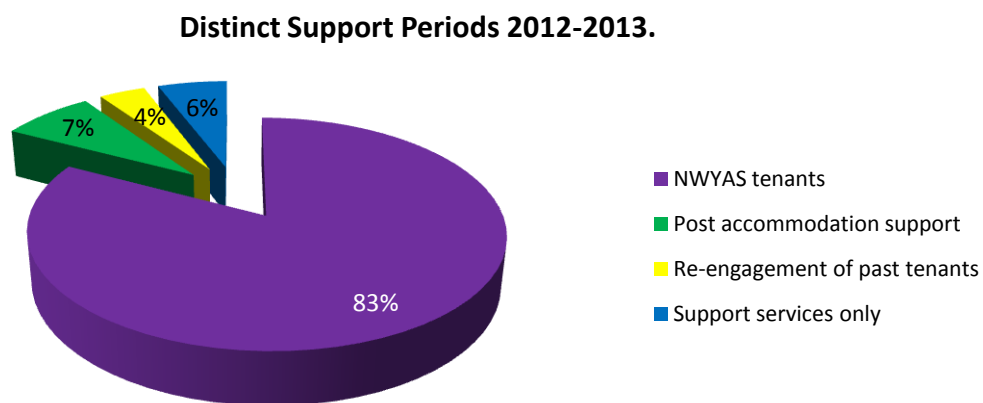


Worthy of special mention is the completion by Christine Robinson of a Diploma of Social Housing. Over 18 months, Christine has been attending intensive workshops and completing assessment, in addition to working full time. I would like to thank Social Housing Programs (Dept. of Housing and Public Works) for the study assistance they provided and congratulate Christine on her commitment to professional development and her achievement of this qualification.

Tanya Turrell
MANAGER

SPECIALIST HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT

It has been a very busy year, and the support team is very proud of the outcomes that young people have achieved so far and the steps they are taking to make positive changes in their life. This financial year has seen NWYAS Inc. provide 52 distinct support periods with 43 young people housed and supported within NWYAS Inc. Specialist Homelessness Service.

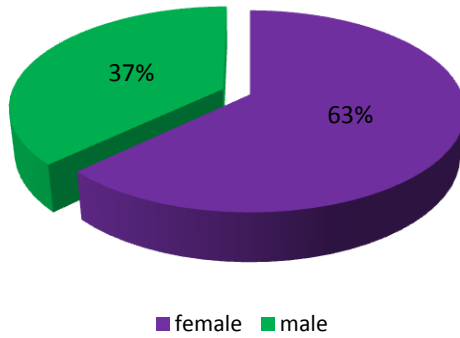


A breakdown of the graph above shows:

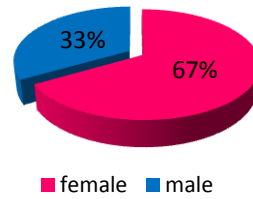
- NWYAS Inc. provided forty-three young people with supported accommodation in the 2012-2013 financial year.
- Four young people accessed external support post NWYAS Inc. accommodation to assist with sustaining their exit housing option. These exit housing options were with Community Housing and Transitional Housing which resulted in the transition to long term Social Housing.
- Two young people and one adult with three children accessed NWYAS Inc. support only services for more than “one off” support. The outcomes for the two young people were support and advocacy which resulted in the provision of Social Housing and the family were linked into appropriate services.
- Two young people who were previous tenants of NWYAS Inc. reconnected with support to assist with sustaining their tenancy and with other contributing factors that were impacting their current tenancy.

A gendered analysis of the clients of NWYAS Inc. show that more than half of the young people housed are women compared to their male counterparts. A comparison of our annual data over the last three years shows that there are a significantly larger percentage of young women who refer as well as gain supported accommodation with NWYAS Inc.

Gender analysis of housed young people 2012-2013.



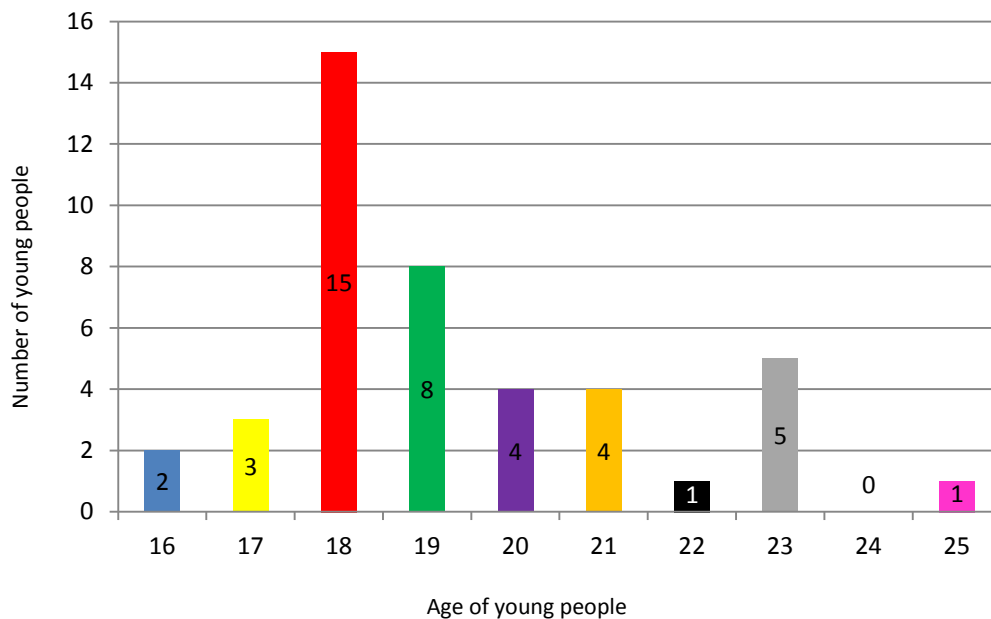
Gender analysis of accompanying children 2012-2013.



As the graph above demonstrates, NWYAS Inc. has provided supported accommodation to 27 females and 16 males. We have had eight family groups with nine accompanying children over the 2012-2013 year.

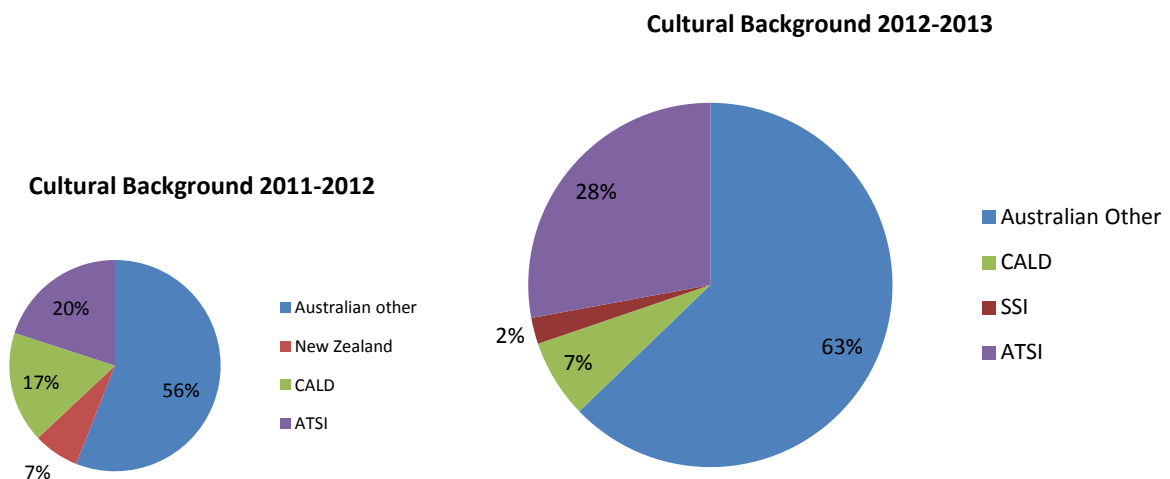
The majority of young people housed in this year were aged between 18 and 19 years old. A change to our service agreement means that NWYAS Inc. now provides supported accommodation to young people up to the age of 25.

Age of young people when first housed 2012-2013.



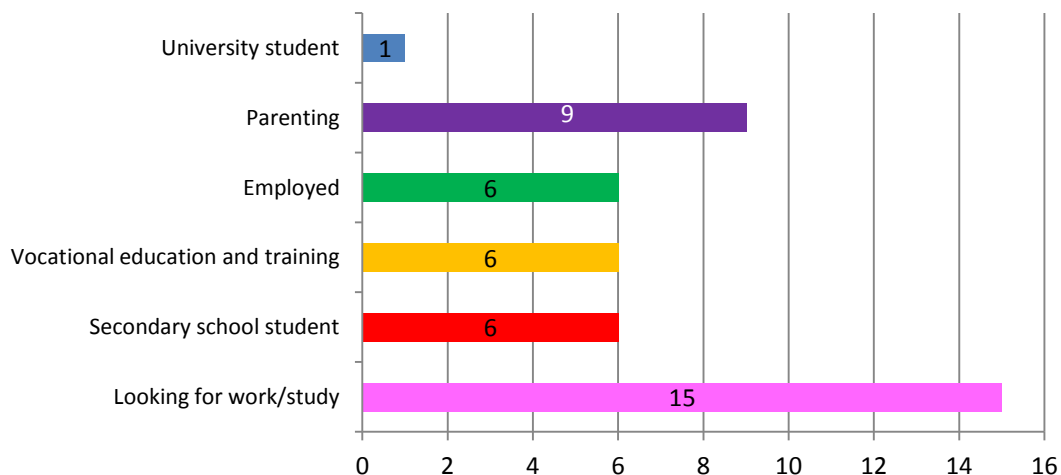
While the majority of young people housed identify as Australian Other (ie. Australian born, not identifying as Indigenous), NWYAS Inc. saw an increase in young people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) compared to last financial year. A large proportion of our young people who identify as ATSI have referred to NWYAS Inc. due to having family and/or friends that have been previously housed and supported by NWYAS Inc. We are proud to have a good relationship with the Indigenous community in the North West corridor and strive to continue to provide culturally appropriate support to this cohort of young people. Below is a comparison of NWYAS Inc. client's cultural background from the past two years.

Comparison of Cultural Background 2011/2012 - 2012/2013



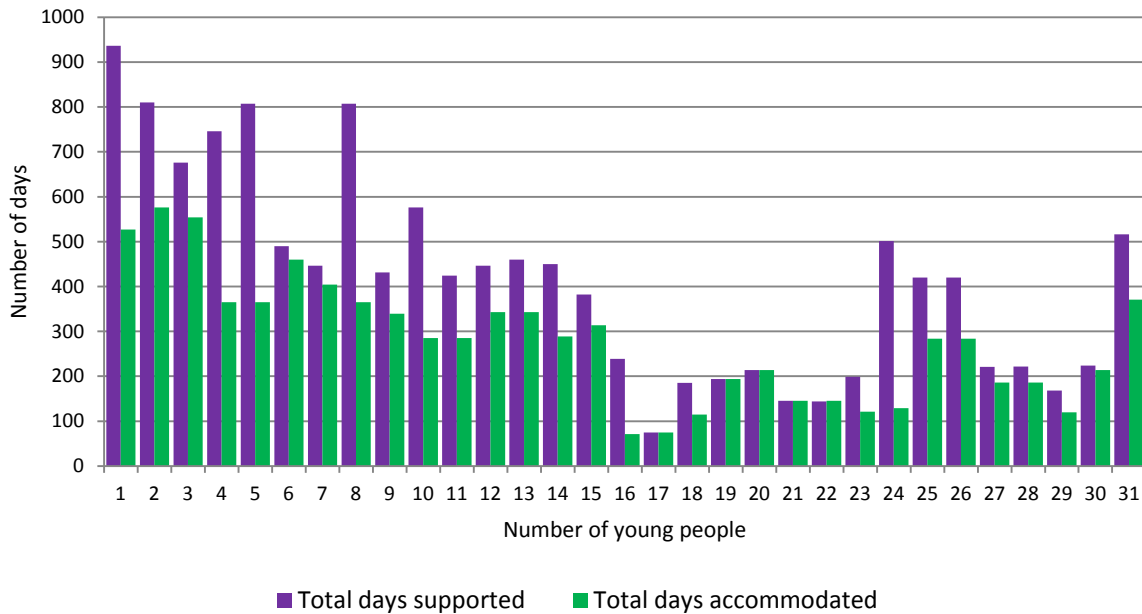
Many of our young people are engaged in various types of education and employment. While not all young people have a daily activity, a broad snapshot of young people's satisfaction with the way they spend their time is captured in the Outcome Star™ (data in the "Meaningful Use of Time" domain). Below is a breakdown on the young people's daily activity.

Young people's daily activity 2012-2013.



On average, young people of NWEYAS Inc. are accommodated for 280 days and receive support for 419 days.

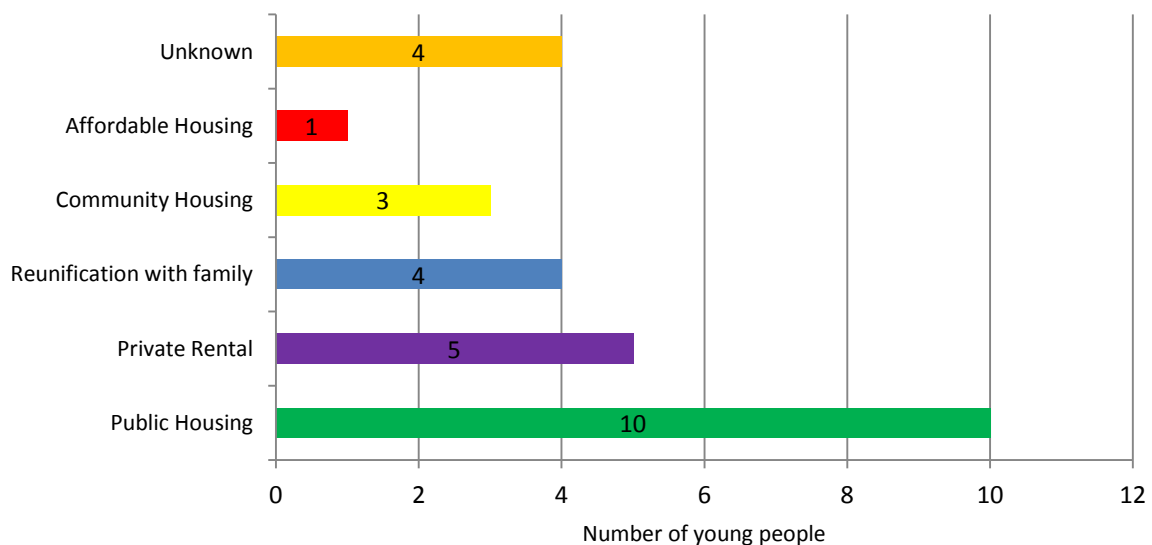
Length of accommodation and support provided 2012-2013.



Support work with young people often starts prior to a young person being accommodated. This support is generally provided around income support, maintaining current accommodation, linking in with additional support services and preparing for independent living.

Of the 43 young people NWEYAS Inc. provided support accommodation to, 27 young people have exited the service with 22 exits being planned.

Housing Outcomes 2012-2013.



While every effort is taken to support young people and the choices they make while involved with the service, sometimes young people are not yet ready to live independently or have not developed the skills to do so. NWYAS Inc. works to educate young people on their roles and responsibilities of being a tenant and provide open and transparent communication and information around how to sustain and maintain their tenancy. Support is provided to young people to explore the contributing factors that may be the reason for tenancy breakdown and ways to minimise those factors.

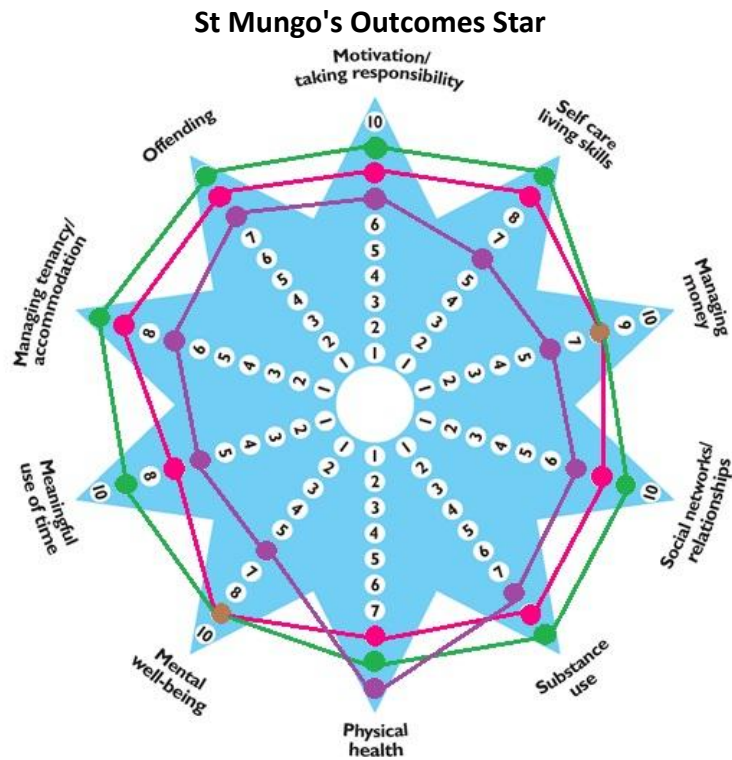
Post accommodation support is offered to all young people exiting NWYAS Inc. with an additional three months of support. Primarily, external support is focused on stabilising new housing outcomes. Support is provided around assisting young people through the sign up process, managing money and personal administration, linking in with support services in their new neighbourhood and any other area of the young person's life that they identify to be an impacting factor on their new tenancy.

Young people who exit into Community, Affordable and Public Housing can request and negotiate support and liaison with NWYAS Inc. and the housing providers to assist the young person's transition and sustainment of their independent housing.

NWYAS Inc. has adopted the Outcomes Star™ as a tool to assist young people to assess their *readiness for change* in ten main areas (domains) where there may be factors contributing to their homelessness.

The core focus of support offered to young people is aligned to the Outcomes Star™ domains of Managing Tenancy and Accommodation, Self Care and Living Skills and Managing Money. NWYAS Inc. prioritises these domains when providing support, with a view to developing and enhancing young people's skills to sustain and maintain a tenancy in the greater community. We do, however, work with young people to attend to all domains where there are barriers to making the transition to independence.

The benefits of focusing support in these three domains is evidenced by the high number of independent housing outcomes and the ability of young people to sustain them. Data from the Outcomes Star™ demonstrates that nearly all young people progress to a higher level of readiness for change, it is important to note that this tool is not intended to document outcomes/outputs. The Outcomes Star™ is a useful visual aid to document with young people the certain areas of their life that they have been working on and to celebrate the big and small changes made.



On the Star above, the three colours represent the average Stage of Change that our young people are at in their journey with NWYAS Inc. The first reading is undertaken prior to accepting an offer of accommodation, and the final reading is done at the end of the support period. The third reading reflects a time during the support period. This snap shot of young people's change over a 15 month period demonstrates the importance of support in relation to assisting young people to move through the homelessness system and out into independent housing outcomes.

It is interesting to note the domains that have the most significant shift in readiness for change between the first and last readings are:

- Self Care and Living Skills
- Mental Well-being
- Meaningful Use of Time
- Managing Tenancy/Accommodation.

Such a significant shift in the stages of change for young people in the above mentioned domains is likely to be the result of the provision of stable and affordable housing that allows the young person time and space to focus on other areas of their life, like stabilising their mental health, re-engaging with education or employment and learning the skill set to manage their tenancy and to look after themselves and their home.

The NWYAS Inc. Integrated Model of Service Delivery results in a cohesiveness between the provision of Transitional Accommodation and Specialist Youth Homelessness Support. This creates opportunities for young people to develop increased skills to sustain their tenancies with us, and make the transition to independent living.

Deon Menerey, Heather Rowe, Sarah Thorne.
SUPPORT WORKERS

TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION

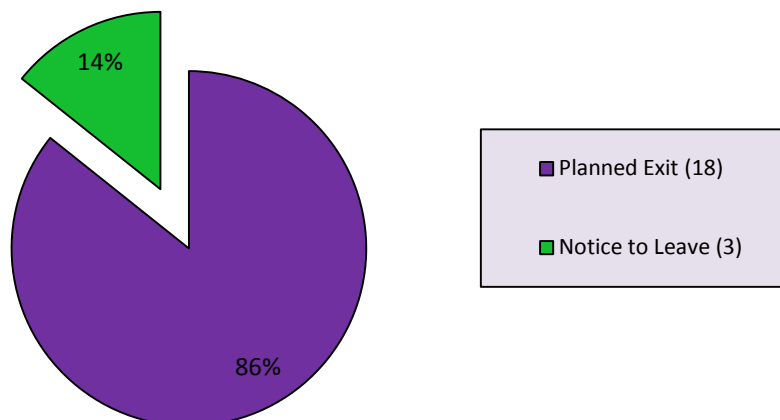
This year has really reinforced my thoughts of the importance of tenancy and support working together to sustain tenancies. I have been employed as the Tenancy Worker now for three years; and I feel in my role, it is important to facilitate education to young people about tenancy laws in Queensland and in particular young people's rights and responsibilities.

This has meant that support workers and I have worked closely together to assist young people to sustain their tenancy with NWYAS Inc. My role has recently extended to include the provision of tenancy support to young people that have transitioned from NWYAS Inc. accommodation into independent housing.

Key achievements and outcomes for the 2012-2013 year:

- For the second consecutive year, there were no Notice to Remedy Breaches were issued for rent arrears, 100% of young people were at least 7 days in advance all year;
- A 98% Occupancy rate was achieved over the year;
- 70% of tenancies ended with a full bond refund, meaning young people had successfully exited their unit in a clean and undamaged state;
- 55% of tenancies ended with rent credit and received a rent refund.

Tenant Exits 2012-2013



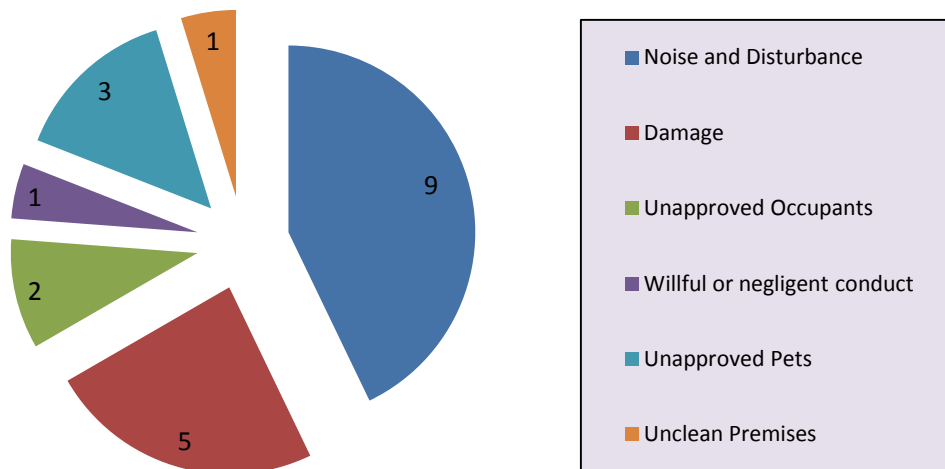
** Number of tenancies different to number of young people – Tenancies counted by number of Tenancy Agreements, for example: couple counted as one tenancy*

**Planned exits – Tenant maintained tenancy until they found alternative accommodation and exited within the terms of their tenancy agreement and support plans.*

Out of 21 exits in the last financial year, 3 tenancies were issued with a Notice to Leave due to breaches of their Tenancy Agreements with us. A positive result was that 18 exits were planned after young people were able to sustain their tenancy with NWYAS Inc.

During the year, 5 tenancies were identified as “at risk”. After completing our Tenancy at Risk process, 2 of these tenancies (4 young people) were able to sustain their accommodation for the remainder of their lease agreement.

Notice to Remedy Breaches Issued 2012-2013



- Noise and Disturbance were the majority breaches issued with 9 issued this year.
- 5 breaches issued for damage this year compared to only 2 for the previous year.
- Despite the increase of damages, 83% of debt repayments were repaid.
- There was significant reduction of the number of breaches issued for Unapproved Occupants; 11 were issued in the 2011-12 year compared to 2 for this year.

Another significant achievement of the past year is the completion of my final workshops for the Diploma of Social Housing. This additional training has assisted me to develop new skills in the management of organisational assets, client services delivery and quality assurance procedures.

Significant property upgrades were completed this year and included internal repainting, new vinyl flooring, new turf in courtyards and new fencing. It has been a big year for property management, negotiating with contractors as well as keeping our tenants well informed with the works being completed at the properties.

I was happy to be able to refurnish our 13 properties with new beds, couches, fridges, washing machines and other basic furniture with funding from Jupiter's Community Benefit Fund. We are very happy with the end result and proud of the accommodation we get to offer young people in our community.

I look forward to the year ahead and continuing to support young people in our community to work towards achieving and sustaining independent housing.

Christine Robinson
TENANCY WORKER

OUR SUPPORTERS

Funded by



**Queensland
Government**

In addition to our core funding from the Queensland Government, NWWYAS Inc., as a not for profit, community based organisation, relies on small grants and the in kind donation of services from a range of businesses. The donation of funds from individuals and organisations also allows us to provide additional practical assistance and opportunities to young people who are clients of our service. We would like to express our most sincere appreciation to the following organisations for their support & assistance in 2012-2013:



Winbasic



Iris Integration



Marketing theProduct



GIVIT



QPILCH



Amovita



Jupiter's Casino
Community Benefit Fund



Lord Mayors
Community Trust



Ferny Grove State School



Brisbane Basket Brigade