

National Housing Conference

Broome Youth and Families Hub
Yawuru Country – Broome, West Kimberley
Western Australia

An aerial photograph of a coastline. The top half shows a rugged cliff face made of bright red sandstone, with sparse green vegetation growing on top. The bottom half shows the ocean with white-capped waves crashing against dark grey rocks. The text is centered in a white box with a thin black border.

I would like to acknowledge the Yagara and Turrbal people as the Traditional Custodians of Meeanjin (Brisbane).

I pay my respects to their elders both past, present and emerging.

I extend my gratitude to all people here today attending the ARHUI conference who are imparting their knowledge, sharing their stories and listening deeply to create future change.

A Little Bit About Me ..

I work as a manager in an office of community service programs for Broome Youth and Families Hub, known better to the locals as BYFH. The programs I manage include **Homestretch, Children's and Families Service, Youth Housing** and the **Kimberley Pathway Pilot**. I oversaw the roll out of **Target 120** earlier in the year which focuses on Youth Crime prevention through the support of young people and their families.

I am a Counsellor by trade, with a background in the arts, I have spent a good ten years living and working in remote regions of the Kimberley and Western Australia with the privilege to walk alongside many First Nations people, programs and communities.

It has been my experience that where there are grassroots, community driven initiatives, designed and developed by Aboriginal Controlled Organisations and relevant local people, funded accordingly, this is where impactful outcomes can really be achieved. Deep listening, an open mind and heart, curiosity to continue to learn and a ground up approach has always shown me that which can be done.

A circular logo with a blue background and white text. The text reads "Home Stretch" in a large, bold font, with "WA" in a smaller font below it. A dotted white line curves around the bottom of the circle.

Home
Stretch
WA



Home Stretch WA is a young person's CHOICE

Broome Youth and Families Hub is an Aboriginal Controlled Organisation

We are working together with Marra Worra Worra Corporation in Fitzroy Crossing, and the Department of Communities WA, to implement the Home Stretch program in the West Kimberley

Home Stretch WA provides young people with a dignified service offer, and access to the resources they need as a young adult

What does homelessness In Broome, Yawuru Country, look like? How is it different to the metro?

Our re-occurring challenge with Young People in Home Stretch is homelessness.

“ We tell people to buy a tent or sleep at the bank,” was the response I received regarding an accommodation question for a client living in Broome due to the need to receive chemotherapy at the hospital. “Someone held a knife to my throat last night Miss,” a young fella in our Home Stretch program told me when he had nowhere to stay

- **More than 6% of the Kimberley’s total population is homeless**
- **One in eight Aboriginal people living in the Kimberley are facing some form of homelessness**
- Broome has a population of 14,660 people.
- 13.7% experienced Homelessness in 2021. It is the highest level of homelessness in WA!
- Homelessness in Broome is a spectrum, ranging from young people, working professionals, long term community members, people coming into Broome from other places
- Median rental prices \$800-\$1600 per week
- Social Housing wait list is up to 16 years
- Families are living in caravan parks, unable to secure a rental
- Ongoing homelessness crisis has been raised by the Broome community for more than 10 years. The issue remains.

Case Story 1.

“he didn’t know how to help himself, how he felt neglected by his family carer, how he wanted more for his life and didn’t know what steps to take next.”

This young man was homeless, jumping from house to house without a bed, no possessions, a broken phone – staying in some of Broome’s most unsafe houses. He had a mouth full of teeth that were broken due to an accident and a lack of follow up and care – he felt ashamed and lacked confidence, literacy skills were very low and was seen as a “problem.”

What I saw was a young man with a fire in his belly who just needed someone to say “you matter, I am here to help, let’s get started!”

Case Story 2.

Home Stretch WA provides a safety net – when things don't work out.

A family foster placement broke down and the young person was suddenly homeless and disconnected from the supports that had been around him.

Working together with Child Protection Department, we were able to place him in temporary accommodation, where our coach supported him with food, daily check ins and lifts to and from TAFE

During this period of homelessness this young person still managed to attend his TAFE course, enter into alternative learning program over 8 weeks, and building his own electric scooter, which positioned him to achieve a job with the Yawuru Centre.

This young man has a diagnosed disability, and Home Stretch help reconnect him with his carer, repairing the relationship was important.

We connected him with supported accommodation support but two months in, staff break downs put the centre at risk. There was no food being provided due to staffing issues and we had to step in to help.



Our Youth in Broome and the Kimberley need a place to call home.

We have identified funding needs for ...

- Youth Housing
- Young Mum's and Bubs Housing

Please help us bring this conversation in Broome to an end and help us to take action to support our young people.

If you would like further information please feel free to contact me.

Emily Dewar
Broome Youth and Families Hub
Program Manager MG Corporation
Emily.dewar@byfh.org.au