

[AASW National President Christine Craik is available for interview](#)

The theme of this year's National Homelessness Week, 6-12 August is "Ending homelessness together", and the Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) agrees that ending homelessness takes an all-of-community approach, which also factors strong links to family violence.

AASW National President Christine Craik said, "Secure and safe housing is the base from which individuals and communities are able to fulfil their potential.

"When people lack access to affordable housing, or are forced to flee from violence, this directly affects their employment, health and educational opportunities.

"Homelessness disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, including those who have arrived in Australia in the last five years who make up 15 per cent of homelessness and young people under 35 who make up 60 per cent.

"We are also concerned about the increasing homelessness in those aged 55 and over. The current system assumes home ownership among those in this age group, and often it's not the case. This is especially true for women who spent years of unpaid work raising families who don't have a partner later in life, for many reasons. These women can be particularly vulnerable to homelessness. Of course, these issues are exacerbated if there is family violence involved."

AASW supports the Everybody's Home campaign, which calls on the government address homelessness in a holistic way, including to devise a National Housing Strategy and a plan to end homelessness by 2030.

In keeping with this year's theme of ending homeless together, the AASW calls on the government to work with the community to:

Reform tax treatment of housing to remove market distortions and improve affordability Promote public and private investment in new affordable housing to address the shortfall in affordable housing stock Increase the maximum rate and improve indexation of Commonwealth Rent Assistance to relieve rental stress Reform tenancy protections to provide more security for people who rent. Ms Craik said, "The last Federal Budget failed to allocate anything in 2018 to address the affordable housing crisis in Australia. There is no reason that in a prosperous country like ours that homelessness should have increased in the last five years. Social workers everywhere urge the government to invest in this most basic of human rights. The social and economic return will undoubtedly be positive for all Australians."

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