



Submission: Inquiry into the Extent and Nature of Poverty in Australia

February 2023



**Jesuit
Social Services**
Building a Just Society

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Jesuit Social Services: Who we are and what we do

Jesuit Social Services is a social change organisation working with some of the most marginalised individuals, families and communities, who are often experiencing multiple and complex challenges. We have been working for 45 years delivering support and advocating for improved policies, legislation and resources to achieve strong, cohesive and vibrant communities where every individual can play their role and flourish.

Our vision is to build a just society – a society where people have access to the opportunities they need to thrive.

Jesuit Social Services works where the need is greatest and where we have the capacity, experience and skills to make the most difference. Our services span Victoria, New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

Our programs and advocacy

Our services and advocacy focus on these areas:

- **Place-based approaches and ecological justice** – advocacy and research around the systemic change needed to achieve a ‘just transition’ towards a sustainable future, and supporting community members to lead more sustainable lives through place-based approaches to social and ecological problems.
- **Justice and crime prevention** – people involved with the justice system.
- **Education, training and employment** – people with barriers to education and sustainable employment.
- **Mental health and wellbeing** – people with multiple and complex needs including mental illness, trauma, homelessness and bereavement.
- **Gender Justice** – leadership on the reduction of violence and other harmful behaviours prevalent among boys and men, and new approaches to improve their wellbeing and keep families and communities safe.
- **Settlement and community building** – recently arrived immigrants and refugees, and communities experiencing disadvantage.

Research, advocacy and policy are coordinated across all program and major interest areas of Jesuit Social Services. Our advocacy is grounded in the knowledge, expertise and experiences of program staff and participants, and academic research and evidence. We seek to influence policies, practices, legislation and budget investment to positively influence people’s lives and improve approaches to address long-term social challenges. For further details of our programs, and policy, research and advocacy, please see [here](#).

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of all the lands on which Jesuit Social Services operates and pay respect to their Elders past and present. We express our gratitude for First Nations peoples’ love and care of people, community, land and all life.

Executive summary

Jesuit Social Services welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Senate Inquiry into the Extent and Nature of Poverty in Australia. It is our belief that every person living in Australia should have access to the opportunities in life that will enable them to flourish – to complete their education, to get a job, to access safe and affordable housing, to raise their children in safe communities and to see the next generation thrive.

In this submission, rather than concentrate on income-based measures of poverty, we focus on broader concepts of disadvantage and equity to more fully examine the web of challenges that continue to limit life outcomes for too many people across Australia. These include:

- Place-based social and ecological inequity;
- Insufficient income support and an inadequate social safety net;
- Structural barriers to education, training and employment;
- Gender-based violence and inequity;
- Insufficient, inadequate or insecure housing;
- Contact with child protection and out-of-home care systems; and
- Exposure to the criminal justice system, particularly at an early age.

Some of these sources of disadvantage are well known. Insufficient income support and social security payments reinforce disadvantage and restrict opportunities to move out of poverty. Inadequate or disrupted education significantly limits opportunities and creates barriers that are increasingly difficult to overcome. Protracted unemployment or dependence on multiple insecure or low paying jobs creates sustained financial hardship not only for the people directly affected but also their children, increasing the likelihood of poverty continuing over multiple generations. Similarly, expensive or uncertain housing has far reaching effects. Insecure accommodation contributes not only to financial insecurity but poorer physical and mental health, and significantly affects the ability of people to fully participate socially and economically.

Other sources of poverty are less understood. Disadvantage has a clear geographical dimension. Jesuit Social Services' own research through our [*Dropping off the Edge*](#) (DOTE) reports spanning 23 years have shown that certain locations experience significantly more social disadvantage than others and that a small but persistent number of locations in each state and territory across Australia continue to experience complex and entrenched disadvantage. Further, these communities also experience disproportionate environmental injustice, represented by factors such as higher levels of air pollution, greater exposure to heat stress, and poorer access to green spaces.

Additionally, while family violence is often identified as a driver of poverty and insecure housing, rarely does the discussion go to the next step of putting a focus on early intervention and the behaviour of boys and men. Gender inequity also manifests in inequitable resource allocation and power imbalances within families that create dependence, reduce economic opportunities, and limit social connection.

Finally, contact with the criminal justice system, particularly for young people, and especially if they are incarcerated, disrupts and reduces education and increases the likelihood of further bouts of imprisonment. Importantly, as well as creating disadvantage on their own, factors including location, family violence and incarceration reinforce other sources of disadvantage and significantly reduce the ability of people to achieve fulfilling lives.

As a society we cannot, and should not, turn away from the above challenges, no matter how difficult it may be to tackle them. Jesuit Social Services believes that change can be achieved when these interrelated root causes of disadvantage are understood and place-based solutions are properly resourced.

Our recommendations

Jesuit Social Services calls on governments to take the below actions in order to achieve intergenerational change and ensure no one is left behind:

1. Resource **place-based solutions** to support thriving, resilient and climate-just communities.
2. Embed **a fair social security system** encompassing an adequate level of income support and person-centred employment services.
3. Commit to full access to **sustainable employment**, including by guaranteeing opportunities for young people, fully utilising the skills of migrants and refugees, and addressing cultural issues related to the safety of women and other minority groups.
4. Increase investment in **safe, secure and sustainable social housing** and provide **supported housing options** for people with multiple and complex needs, including young people leaving care.
5. Address the **underlying drivers of violence and other harmful behaviours by boys and men** by investing in research, workforce capacity building, and early interventions to positively shift cultures and attitudes.
6. Prevent contact with the justice system by raising **the age of criminal responsibility** from 10 to 14 years and developing therapeutic **responses for children in out-of-home care**.

The challenge: Persistent and entrenched disadvantage

Jesuit Social Services has researched disadvantage at the community level over the past 23 years. The most recent report, *Dropping off the Edge 2021*, measured outcomes against 37 indicators of disadvantage including social, economic, health and crime related disadvantage.¹ For the first time, *Dropping off the Edge 2021* also measured environmental disadvantage including exposure to heat stress, poor air quality and a lack of green canopy.

Dropping off the Edge 2021 showed clearly that disadvantage is disproportionately concentrated in a small number of communities in each state and territory. In Victoria, five per cent of locations accounted for 29 per cent of the most disadvantaged rankings across all indicators. In New South Wales, 13 per cent of locations accounted for just over half of the most disadvantaged rankings – a pattern that was repeated in all states and territories. The report shows clearly that disadvantage is also entrenched in many communities. All of the top 10 most disadvantaged location in Victoria were also classified as highly disadvantaged in 2015. Nine of the top 10 in NSW, eight of the top 10 in Queensland and 19 of the top 20 in South Australia were all also classified as highly disadvantaged in 2015 – many of them also ranking as highly disadvantaged in 2007.

When looking at where disadvantage is located, it becomes evident that, in general, disadvantage is experienced in regional and remote areas. All of the top 10 most disadvantaged location in the Northern Territory are outside of Darwin despite only one-third of all SA2 locations being outside the city. This trend is repeated to varying degrees in most states – particularly NSW, Western Australia and Queensland.

The indicators most closely linked with general levels of disadvantage in each state and territory include low income, prison admissions, juvenile convictions, family violence, child maltreatment, early school leaving, lack of post-school qualifications, no internet access and poor air quality. The inclusion of environmental indicators including poor air quality confirmed that, often, areas experiencing disadvantage across social and economic indicators are also facing significant disadvantage in terms of environmental indicators impacting their health and cost of living expenses.

While *Dropping off the Edge 2021* shows that the pattern of entrenched disadvantage in each state and territory is persistent over time, change can be achieved when the interrelated factors causing disadvantage are understood and community-led solutions are properly resourced alongside system-wide responses.

It is important to acknowledge that the unevenness of the distribution of poverty in Australia is not only related to geography.² Further, no matter the number of challenges faced by a community, each community possesses unique strengths. Any new approaches to place-based work led by communities in partnership with government would do well to recognise these inherent strengths and resilience within the community and use them as a starting point.

¹ *Dropping off the Edge* measures disadvantage against each indicator at an SA2 level in every state and territory across the country to highlight communities of complex and multi-layered disadvantage. The report also compares the outcomes for locations over time therefore demonstrating the entrenched nature of complex disadvantage.

² For further details, please see the Appendix.

A note on the cost of poverty and disadvantage

Given the extent and diversity of poverty and disadvantage, and its concentration in some groups and areas, poverty reduction might seem to be an expensive undertaking. But a variety of studies of interventions with a poverty reduction component have shown a clearly positive benefit to cost ratio. An analysis of one year of universal early childhood education by PwC found a clear net benefit due to the advantages accruing to the children involved, their parents and carers, and state, territory and Federal governments. From an expenditure of \$2.34 billion, using a three per cent discount rate, PwC identified \$4.74 billion of benefits distributed to a mix of recipients including children (\$919 million in higher lifetime earnings), parents and carers (\$1,463 million in higher earnings), and governments (\$808 million in higher taxation revenue, \$1,127 million from reduced spending on health and crime, plus other savings).³

A study of an approach to housing policy that encouraged construction of affordable dwellings near jobs and services estimated that benefits outweighed costs by a ratio of around five to one. Important benefits came from reduced travel times, higher productivity from people finding jobs that better fitted their skills and qualifications, and alleviation of financial stress (allowing greater expenditure on other goods and services). All these benefits help to reduce poverty, as do other benefits identified in the study but not costed: including reduced family violence and reduced homelessness and their related benefits (reduced crime, reduced health costs, social justice).⁴

Both these studies highlight a vital point – focusing just on the immediate expenditure required to reduce poverty and disadvantage will overlook a range of substantial short- and longer-term benefits that more than justify the outlay.

³ PwC. (2019). A Smart Investment for a Smarter Australia: Economic analysis of universal early childhood education in the year before school in Australia The Front Project ([Weblink](#))

⁴ MacLennan, D. et. al. (2019). *Strengthening Economic Cases for Housing Policies* City Futures Research Centre. ([Weblink](#))

1. Place-based approaches to support thriving and resilient communities

In 2021, Jesuit Social Services established our [Centre for Just Places](#), with significant seed funding from Gandel Foundation and the Victorian Government, to support and enable place-based approaches to social and ecological justice through research, collaboration, engagement and knowledge exchange.

Place-based approaches aim to empower communities to develop and deliver innovative local solutions over the long term by bringing together members of the community, community organisations, businesses, government and public services such as schools and health centres. Critically, place-based approaches can encompass initiatives that support people from birth across the life span, and in a range of different areas such as mental health, justice and crime prevention, and employment. They should be led by, and build the capacities and resources of, local communities.

Case study: Together in 2770 – community-led collaboration for the best start

Together in 2770 is a place-based, collective impact initiative that brings residents, services, business and local government together so that the 6,000 children aged 0-5 in Mt Druitt, the 2770 postcode, have the best possible start to life. This shared goal has been identified in collaboration with the local community. It acknowledges that the first five years of a child's life are crucial and for a child to start life well, the ecosystem around them (family, community and systems) needs to be functioning effectively. Jesuit Social Services plays a leadership role in the [Together in Willmot](#) sub-group alongside The Hive (United Way Australia), BaptistCare HopeStreet, Willmot Public School, Salvation Army, and Connect Child and Family Services as well as Willmot community members. A 2020 [evaluation](#) of the initiative found that in its first four years, Together in Willmot has contributed to change across three levels:

- Improving the enabling conditions for longer-term change through their collective approach;
- Systems-level changes, such as changes in mindset, practice, resource flows, power and relationships; and
- Early instances of change for children, families and the community in Willmot.

In 2021-22, the Centre for Just Places led a consortium of research partners examining literature, evidence and practice to understand what features enable the success of place-based approaches and how to best support them – information essential to improving the wellbeing of communities into the future. These reports, [What works for place-based approaches in Victoria](#), will inform the continued paradigm shift across government, funders, organisations and innovators working to address inequities and build the capacities of communities. A key finding was that sustainable, flexible and adequate resourcing is a critical enabler of effective place-based approaches.

Jesuit Social Services calls on governments to work with communities to identify locations of complex disadvantage, through Dropping off the Edge research, and adequately resource long-term, place-based approaches in these locations that centre community decision-making and address the factors that lead to and perpetuate inequity and disadvantage.

1.1 Building climate-just communities

As previously mentioned, the findings of our *Dropping off the Edge* 2021 research show that communities that experience persistent disadvantage often also experience disproportionate environmental injustice, represented through such factors as higher levels of air pollution,⁵ exposure to heat stress,⁶ and poorer access to green open spaces.⁷ The impacts of climate change on disadvantaged communities are becoming increasingly evident over summer. People living on low-incomes in outdated, uninsulated housing are sweltering through heatwaves without access to effective cooling,⁸ and those living in Melbourne’s public housing buildings report taking extreme measures to escape the heat.⁹

The situation is dire for people living in Australia’s prisons who disproportionately come from marginalised and disadvantaged backgrounds. In January 2021, temperatures at Roebourne Regional Prison in Western Australia – where the majority of inmates are Aboriginal – reached 50.5 degrees, and yet the Western Australian Government initially refused to install air conditioning. In November last year, following public scrutiny, the government announced it would install air conditioning, however, not until after this summer.¹⁰

Jesuit Social Services’ [Prisons, climate and a just transition discussion paper](#) shines a light on the impact of climate change on people in Australian prisons, drawing on stories of prison systems under stress, like this one from Roebourne prison in 2020:¹¹

“While we inspected Roebourne prison in the cooler months of May, the memory of the hottest months was still keen in the minds of the prisoners we spoke to, and we received many complaints from staff and prisoners about the unbearable heat... During the inspection prisoners told of us having to endure prickly heat rash for months over the summer.”

Given the serious consequences of climate change for people experiencing disadvantage, both national policy and place-based, community-led solutions are crucial. In recognising the urgent need to support communities to build resilience to climate change, Jesuit Social Services’ [Centre for Just Places](#) has been delivering a range of climate adaptation and resilience initiatives and workshops across metropolitan Melbourne.¹² In doing so, the Centre aims to build place-based climate resilience coalitions and strengthen collaboration between community service organisations and local governments to build resilience to extreme weather and protect the health and wellbeing of those most at-risk.

⁵ Tanton, R., Dare, L., Miranti, R., Vidyattama, Y., Yule, A. and McCabe, M. (2021), *Dropping Off the Edge 2021: Persistent and multilayered disadvantage in Australia*, Jesuit Social Services: Melbourne. Indicator 32. Pg 236.

⁶ Ibid. Indicator 34. Pg 236.

⁷ Ibid. Indicators 33 and 35. Pg 236.

⁸ Kolovos, B. (2022, January 31). “My apartment is literally baking”: calls for minimum standards to keep Australia’s rental homes cool. *The Guardian*. [\(Weblink\)](#)

⁹ Silva, K. (2022). As temperatures soared to 40C, David slept in the stairwell of his public housing complex to keep cool. *ABC News*. [\(Weblink\)](#)

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch. (2023). *Australia: Rights Failings Tarnish Regional Credibility*. Human Rights Watch. [\(Weblink\)](#)

¹¹ Jesuit Social Services. (2021). *Prisons, climate and a just transition*. [\(Weblink\)](#)

¹² See for example our [Collaborative Action Plan for climate justice in Melbourne's west](#) and our [co-designing-a-climate-action-and-resilience-framework-for-neighbourhood-houses-project](#).

Jesuit Social Services' climate adaptation and resilience workshops

Jesuit Social Services' Centre for Just Places has been delivering climate adaptation and resilience workshops across metropolitan Melbourne. The workshops bring together diverse cross-sector organisations working in particular geographic areas and local government areas, including services in the areas of housing and homelessness, mental health, settlement, education and gender justice, as well as religious leaders and local government. Participants report leaving the workshops with a deeper understanding of climate vulnerability and their responsibility to adapt. Resources are shared with participants, including the Jesuit Social Services' [Climate and Ecological Justice Resource Pack](#), which offers practical tools for addressing climate change adaptation within homes and organisations.

The place-based workshops serve as a critical conversation starter, building common understandings of climate vulnerability and community needs in each local government area and catalysing future collaborations. In one local government area, for example, relationships developed through the workshops enabled deep engagement with at-risk community members and their lived experience of climate change. These conversations will inform local government adaptation policy and programs. Elsewhere, they have also provided the foundation for networks of Neighbourhood Houses to come together and commit to developing a collaborative climate action plan.

We call on governments to actively support opportunities for marginalised people to identify and lead solutions to the climate-related challenges they are facing. Further, we recommend that governments take immediate action to drastically drive down emissions across all sectors of the economy. This must be achieved with a just transition to a low-carbon future.¹³

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Partner with state and territory governments and local communities to identify locations of complex disadvantage, through Dropping off the Edge research, and resource long-term, place-based approaches in these locations that centre community decision-making and address factors that lead to inequity and disadvantage.
- Fund further research into entrenched and persistent disadvantage that builds on existing work, seeks to understand broader aspects of health and wellbeing, and supports social infrastructure.
- Build broader community resilience to climate change by resourcing the establishment and coordination of place-based, cross-sector resilience coalitions comprised of and working collaboratively with state and local governments and the community sector to strengthen adaptation planning and policies.¹⁴
- Increase funding and resources for organisations and communities seeking to trial, test and implement climate change adaptation, mitigation and transformation activities.

¹³ Jesuit Social Services. (2019). Just Transitions – expanding the conversation. ([Weblink](#))

¹⁴ The Centre for Just Places coordinates a Resilience Community of Practice which brings together metropolitan and rural organisations to support cross-collaborations, and re-orient systems towards climate equity. For further details, see here: <https://jss.org.au/articles/resilience-cop-vic-election-platform/>

2. A fair social security system

The current rate of JobSeeker is simply insufficient to live on. It is completely unreasonable to expect a person to find and secure a job when they are struggling to survive – when they are forced to miss meals or forgo healthcare and heating in winter because their income is so low.¹⁵ The temporary increase in JobSeeker through the Coronavirus Supplement showed how an increase in income support can drastically improve circumstances for some of the most financially stressed people in society. With that increase, people were able to access rental accommodation, afford medication or purchase items as simple, but essential, as warm clothes. Among people in households on the JobSeeker Payment, poverty fell by four-fifths, from 76 per cent in 2019 to 15 per cent in June 2020.¹⁶

CASE STUDY: Emma*

In a session with her Jesuit Social Services worker, Emma disclosed that once her Centrelink payment increased due to the Coronavirus Supplement, she was able to replace her underwear and obtain a proper winter jacket. This was something she could not previously afford. The increased payment also meant she did not have to decide between buying groceries or the medication she is on for depression and anxiety.

**Participant's names has been changed to protect privacy*

Concerningly, research from ACOSS and UNSW has shown that once the income supports in place were withdrawn during early 2021, income inequality and poverty increased above pre-pandemic levels.¹⁷

Jesuit Social Services strongly supports ACOSS' [Raise the Rate for Good campaign](#) to increase the base rate of JobSeeker and related payments from \$44 per day to at least \$73.¹⁸ Further to this, we would like to see safety nets that accompany JobSeeker such as healthcare cards and rent assistance remain in place until a person has achieved sustained employment. This would enable people to afford essentials such as food, housing, transportation and healthcare as they transition to employment and remove the disincentive to employment caused by the premature loss of other support measures.

2.1 Person-centred employment services

In addition to ensuring an adequate level of income support, we call on the Federal Government to fund a person-centred employment service system. The weight of evidence clearly shows that the Federal employment services system, with its focus on compliance and meeting narrowly prescribed outcomes, is failing people experiencing disadvantage who are looking to secure work. Australia's new employment service for people who are unemployed, Workforce Australia,¹⁹ remains heavily focused on compliance rather than providing practical support for people that makes a difference, such as

¹⁵ ACOSS, "I regularly don't eat at all": Trying to get by on Newstart (July 2019) ([Weblink](#))

¹⁶ Davidson, P., (2022) A tale of two pandemics: COVID, inequality and poverty in 2020 and 2021 ACOSS/UNSW Sydney Poverty and Inequality Partnership, Build Back Fairer Series, Report No. 3, Sydney

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ See: [Raise the Rate For Good](#)

¹⁹ In July 2022, jobactive was the main employment service for people who are unemployed. It has been replaced by a new system called Workforce Australia.

wage subsidies for employers and training that is relevant to career aspirations and employment opportunities.²⁰ Some argue that the privatisation of employment services has “failed to prepare many disadvantaged jobseekers for work and made others less employable by demeaning them”.²¹

Jesuit Social Services believes that the employment services system must be non-compulsory, that it not be the policing arm of the welfare system, and that it be delivered by community and not-for-profit providers. The shortcomings of contracting out employment services to for-profit organisations have been evident since their establishment. Further, the employment services employment system must enable sufficient time and resources to be invested in those who are most disadvantaged.²² The most effective support for people experiencing disadvantage occurs through building a relationship with a person and taking the time to understand their strengths, hopes and aspirations.

The Victorian Government Jobs Victoria Employment Services (JVES) provides a model of employment service able to support people who face significant barriers, including past justice involvement, mental-ill health or other complex needs, into jobs. JVES, with its focus on supporting the most disadvantaged, stands as an example of an employment services scheme that is largely working well.

CASE STUDY: Ali*

Ali was working as an interpreter for the Australian and New Zealand armies in Iraq. When the Australian Army was preparing to leave, it offered to sponsor Ali and his mother to resettle in Australia. They were granted permanent residency in March 2021. Several months on, Ali was growing frustrated and anxious. He hadn't been able to find a job. Securing work was his main priority, so that he could support himself and his mother as they began their new life in Australia. A friend recommended the JVES program. Ali was flexible about what roles he was prepared to take on. JVES staff helped him create several different versions of his resume, to assist with the variety of roles he was applying for. Through one of our JVES Employment Brokers a suitable role came in – working with asylum seekers. JVES staff worked with Ali to help him apply quickly. Ali got the job. Staff helped him navigate Melbourne's public transport system and figure out the best route to get to work. Ali has started work and is loving his role. He says that his new colleagues are kind and supportive. Ali is in weekly contact with his Employment Mentor who ensures that any issues or barriers that may arise are addressed quickly.

**Name changed to protect identity.*

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Increase the base rate of JobSeeker and related payments to at least \$73 per day, as outlined by ACOSS in its Raise the Rate for Good campaign.

²⁰ ACOSS. (2022). Restoring full employment: Policies for the Jobs and Skills Summit. ([Weblink](#))

²¹ Henriques-Gomes, L. (2022). Chair of Australia's job services inquiry questions privatisation, likens compliance to Squid Game. *The Guardian*. ([Weblink](#))

²² Jesuit Social Services. (2019). Submission to the Senate Education and Employment References Committee's inquiry into jobactive. ([Weblink](#))

- Extend eligibility for JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and related payments to people on bridging visas and other temporary visa holders.
- Replace the compliance-focused Workforce Australia system, including inflexible mutual obligation requirements, with a new model that is flexible, person-centred, voluntary, and is delivered by community sector and not-for-profit organisations.

3. Pathways to education, training and employment

The connection between education and poverty is self-reinforcing. Low educational attainment is a significant source of disadvantage: it limits a person’s productive potential and hence their employment opportunities, and acts as a barrier to full social engagement.²³ Young people facing disadvantage, for example, due to being from a single-parent family, a language background other than English, having a caring responsibility for a family member, or being in contact with child protection and out-of-home care, are more likely to face social exclusion at school and have lower educational attainment.²⁴

Fundamental to Jesuit Social Services’ vision of building a just society is the role of education, lifelong learning and employment. We know that when people are able to fully access education, training and employment, this has significant benefits for their own wellbeing, their family’s wellbeing and the wellbeing of communities.²⁵ In supporting people to reach their full potential, including to find and retain sustainable and secure work, we must address the structural barriers to participation that many people face.

3.1 Social inclusion fund and strategy

There can be no one-size-fits-all approach to working towards full employment in locations experiencing multiple aspects of disadvantage. Each community has its own specific strengths and challenges, and what may improve education, training and employment outcomes for a metropolitan community in Victoria will be different to what helps a regional community in Queensland.

Jesuit Social Services therefore calls on the Federal Government to introduce a Social Inclusion Fund resourced at the same level as the \$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund, to create local opportunities for people who have had limited opportunities to learn, study or work, particularly in locations of complex disadvantage as identified in the *Dropping off the Edge* research. Social Inclusion Boards should be established to centre community decision-making and to identify local priorities and opportunities for increased jobs in the care, community service and environment sectors. The Social Inclusion Fund would be used to create local jobs to meet these local needs.

To achieve intergenerational change, we call on the Federal Government to commit to a 10 to 20-year comprehensive Social Inclusion Strategy to address the persistent disadvantage experienced by the most disadvantaged communities in Australia as identified through *Dropping off the Edge*.

²³ For further information regarding the barriers to education, training and employment, please see the Appendix.

²⁴ Redmond, G., Main, G., O’Donnell, A. W., Skattebol, J., Woodman, R., Mooney, A., ... & Brooks, F. (2022). Who excludes? Young people’s experience of social exclusion. *Journal of Social Policy*, 1-24. [\(Weblink\)](#); Mendis, K., Gardner, F., & Lehmann, J. (2015). The education of children in out-of-home care. *Australian Social Work*, 68(4), 483-496.

²⁵ Cole, K., Daly, A., & Mak, A. (2009). Good for the soul: The relationship between work, wellbeing and psychological capital. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 38(3), 464-474.

3.2 Youth transitions to education, training and employment

Engaging in education or commencing work after finishing secondary school allows young people to grow their skills and abilities, and builds a socially cohesive and inclusive society.²⁶ Conversely, an absence of education or employment after completion of high school can lead to future unemployment, lower incomes and employment insecurity.²⁷

Where a young person lives impacts their vulnerability to becoming disengaged from education, training and/or employment after secondary schooling. In May 2020, the proportion of young people who were not in employment, education or training was more than twice as high for those living in the lowest socioeconomic areas as for those in the highest.²⁸

Jesuit Social Services calls for a Youth Job Guarantee that would ensure all young people are supported into secure employment, education or training that is aligned with their interests and goals, within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. Further, we recommend that local jobs and skills opportunities are created through the introduction of the Social Inclusion Fund to meet local care, community and environmental service needs, for young people who might otherwise be left behind.

3.3 Pre-accredited training opportunities

Pre-accredited training provides an important stepping stone into employment for people with low levels of educational attainment and for people who have been out of the workplace or education for some time. Access to pre-accredited training provides an opportunity to successfully engage or re-engage in education and enhance skills and work readiness. For some people, this is the first such opportunity in many years. Through pre-accredited training provided by Jesuit Social Services, participants gain the essential vocational and personal skills they need to make a successful transition to formal accredited training and employment.

We call on the Federal Government to invest in pre-accredited training programs to support people to enter or re-enter education and training to obtain employment. Further, we support [Per Capita's](#) recommendation for the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to undertake a broad evaluation of pre-employment programs in Australia which with input from community sector representative groups and employers.²⁹

3.4 Supporting people from migrant and refugee backgrounds into employment

The importance of meaningful work for newly arrived people is significant. Employment fosters broader participation in society, provides a sense of purpose, and creates opportunities for migrants to become contributing members of the community. Unfortunately, many people from migrant and refugee backgrounds face unemployment and underemployment – with their skills underutilised.

²⁶ AIHW. (2021). Australia's youth: Engagement in education or employment. ([Weblink](#))

²⁷ de Fontenay C, Lampe B, Nugent J & Jomini P 2020. Climbing the jobs ladder slower: young people in a weak labour market: Working paper. Canberra: Productivity Commission; Pech J, McNevin A & Nelms L 2009. Young people with poor labour force attachment: a survey of concepts, data and previous research. Canberra: Australian Fair Pay Commission.

²⁸ AIHW. (2021). Australia's youth: Engagement in education or employment. ([Weblink](#))

²⁹ Per Capita. (2023). Submission to the Workforce Australia Inquiry: Pre-Employment Programs and ParentsNext ([Weblink](#))

Evidence increasingly suggests that a significant number of migrants and refugees with overseas-obtained post-school qualifications are working in lower-skilled jobs, due to a lack of recognition of overseas obtained-qualifications and skills.³⁰ This has significant economic and social costs.³¹ Jesuit Social Services believes that the role of business as an enabler of social inclusion should be more actively explored and promoted. This requires moving away from a transactional relationship between business and marginalised people to one grounded in an understanding of the capacity of business to work with organisations and the community.

Jesuit Social Services has a long history of working in partnership with companies to support people from diverse backgrounds to move into work aligned to their skills and qualifications. Effective models already exist and can be built upon, including the African Australian Inclusion Program (AAIP), and Jesuit Social Services' Corporate Diversity Partnerships program.

3.5 Digital equity

The impact of digital inequity and digital illiteracy are issues that demand more policy attention as online tools and platforms become increasingly central to work, education and other services. Throughout the pandemic, Jesuit Social Services has witnessed the impact of digital exclusion on many of the people we work with. Many of our participants lacked adequate access to the internet, either at home or through mobile phone data, as well as to devices such as laptops. Still others lack the skills to effectively utilise these technologies – an issue largely due to a lack of access in the first place. High internet costs are prohibitive, and larger families with school-age children may also struggle to share around a single laptop or to use an overburdened internet connection.

Case Study: Michelle – Western Sydney community member

“Living on a Centrelink benefit, I’ve never been able to consider the possibility of signing up to an internet plan. I use pre-paid data when I need to access the internet for my studies, but it is really difficult. Things are particularly difficult at the moment because of COVID. I need to access all my studies online as well as my kids’ school work. I need to participate in Zoom meetings for my TAFE course and for my part-time job. I eat through my pre-paid data really quickly. I have explored signing up for a plan but Telstra won’t allow me to because of past debts. Figuring out a plan that I can afford is really confusing. I’m worried about signing up for a long-term plan when my income may not be stable.”

Jesuit Social Services plays a leadership role in [Wester’ly](#), a place-based campaign in Western Sydney that has formed around the issue of digital inclusion, especially in relation to education. Wester’ly first formed in 2020 in response to digital exclusion challenges faced by Western Sydney community members during lockdown measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.³²

The Federal Government should consider subsidising affordable access to home internet, data and technology for people experiencing disadvantage to ensure no Australian is excluded from broader

³⁰ Productivity Commission. (2016). Migrant Intake into Australia Inquiry report. ([Weblink](#))

³¹ Deloitte. (2018). Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of migrants and refugees. ([Weblink](#))

³² According to the 2016 Census, 30 to 40 per cent of people in Mt Druitt do not have access to the internet. (Note: the 2021 Census did not collect data in relation to digital inclusion).

social and economic participation. A flexible response is required that takes account of different needs, such as those of people experiencing homelessness. For low-income households, the No Australian Left Offline campaign for affordable broadband offers a potential model that would see the NBN Co offer a 50 mbps unlimited broadband service at a wholesale price of \$20 per month to households receiving government financial support.³³ This proposal should be strongly considered by the Federal Government.

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Develop a Youth Job Guarantee that would ensure all young people are supported into secure employment, education or training that is aligned with their interests and goals, within four months of leaving formal education or becoming unemployed.
- Invest in pre-accredited training programs to support people to enter or re-enter education and training as a pathway to employment.
- Invest in and call on public service agencies and corporate organisations to consider shared social impact initiatives to support under and unemployed skilled professionals from migrant and refugee backgrounds into employment, such as the Corporate Diversity Partnerships program.
- Consider subsidising affordable access to home internet, data and associated technology for low-income households to ensure no Australian is excluded from broader social and economic participation.

4. Safe, affordable and sustainable housing

The lack of safe, secure and affordable housing is a major cause of financial and social disadvantage. This is particularly true for people already vulnerable to becoming trapped in poverty, including those with mental ill-health, those with multiple and complex needs, young people who may be transitioning from out-of-home care or the justice system, and women, including those moving from prison into unsafe situations. Homelessness is also a growing problem for older people, particularly women: older women are now the fastest growing demographic in homelessness statistics.³⁴

Safe and affordable housing options are crucial to improving well-being, enhancing personal agency, and enabling people to pursue aspirations. But the inadequate supply of suitable housing in Australia is severely exacerbating poverty and disadvantage.

4.1 Increasing the stock of social and supported housing

Extensive research³⁵ indicates that there has been a significant and growing undersupply of social housing dwellings across Australia.

³³ ACCAN. (No date). No Australian Left Offline. ([Weblink](#))

³⁴ Australian Human Rights Commission 2019, *Risk of Homelessness in Older Women*, Australian Human Rights Commission: Sydney. ([Weblink](#))

³⁵ For example: Compass Housing Services (2019). Estimating Current and Future Demand for Housing Assistance: A discussion paper. Hamilton, NSW; Daley, J., Coates, B., & Wiltshire, T. (2018). Housing affordability: Reimagining the Australian dream. Grattan Institute; Parkinson, S., Batterham, D., Reynolds, M., & Wood, G. (2019). The changing geography of homelessness: A spatial analysis from 2001 to 2016, AHURI Final Report. Melbourne: Australia Housing & Urban Research Institute; and Powell, A., Meltzer, A., Martin, C., et al. (2019). The construction of social housing pathways across Australia. Melbourne: Australian Housing & Urban Research Institute

Public housing dwellings built in Australia, 1969-2018



Source: Raynor, K 'Victoria's \$5.4bn Big Housing Build: it is big, but the social housing challenge is even bigger' *The Conversation* (18 November 2020) <https://theconversation.com/victorias-5-4bn-big-housing-build-it-is-big-but-the-social-housing-challenge-is-even-bigger-150161>

The number of people in social housing has not kept pace with the growth in the overall number of households. The proportion of social housing has declined from just under five per cent in 2010 to slightly above four per cent in 2020.³⁶

The situation is also dire for people who are seeking housing in the private rental market. Anglicare Australia's latest *Rental Affordability Snapshot* of rental housing in Australia, taken in March 2022, found that of 45,992 rental listings surveyed, fewer than 10 properties could be afforded by a single person on Youth Allowance or JobSeeker, just 312 for a single person on the Age Pension, and just 61 for a single person with one child under five receiving the Parenting Payment.³⁷ SGS Economics and Planning's *Rental Affordability Index* also highlights poor rental affordability for single people on JobSeeker and rental assistance payments, even with the short-lived Coronavirus supplement. In 2019-20, 42 per cent of all low-income households were in rental stress (more than 30 per cent of their gross income going to rental payments), up from 35 per cent in 2008.³⁸

The inevitable result of the extreme imbalance between housing supply and demand is the relentless increase in the price of even the most basic accommodation. BCEC found that rental costs were a

³⁶ The proportion of social housing has declined from 4.7 per cent in 2010 to 4.2 per cent in 2020 as cited in AIHW, (2021). Housing Assistance Australia. ([Weblink](#))

³⁷ Anglicare Australia. (2022). Rental Affordability Snapshot National Report. ([Weblink](#))

³⁸ SGS Economics and Planning (2022) Rental Affordability Index. Key findings: November 2022. https://www.sgsep.com.au/assets/main/Rental-Affordability-Index_Nov_2022_low-resolution.pdf

major contributor to financial hardship. Of the 1.5 million renters in poverty, **‘it is not unusual for the poorest families to have to survive on less than \$150 per week once housing costs have been paid – that is only \$21.50 a day’**.³⁹

Jesuit Social Services has long called for adequate social security payments to reduce disadvantage including access to safe and adequate housing. While people receiving social security payments such as JobSeeker may be eligible for Commonwealth Rent Assistance, the current level of this crucial support is too low. Jesuit Social Services calls for the rate of Rent Assistance to be immediately raised to reflect increases in rents, and for the ongoing rate and indexation of this payment to be reviewed.

Equally important, more innovative responses are needed to improve the amount, type and quality of affordable and social housing. Such responses include subsidised and supported community housing managed by not-for-profit agencies, but the main focus must be on increasing the stock of good-quality public housing. It is unrealistic to expect private and community housing to rapidly expand and meet the diverse range of needs of those who require social and affordable housing.⁴⁰ The priority should be the construction of adequate public housing to meet current and future demand, coupled with investment in supported housing, including assertive outreach and wraparound supports that enable people with complex needs to stabilise their lives.

4.2 Housing for young people leaving residential care

Young people in out-of-home care often experience high levels of complex disadvantage. Many have been through abuse, neglect, or family hardship and some have also experienced multiple failed foster care arrangements.⁴¹ For years, these young people have been forced to exit care the moment they turn 18, often without the skills they need to find stability on their own. Too often, young people leaving out-of-home care to experience homelessness and have contact with the justice system in the years following.⁴²

While a number of states and territories have introduced extended care safety nets and arrangements, young people in residential care – often placed there rather than foster or kinship care because of challenging behaviours and high and complex needs – are still missing out on support.⁴³ Many of the referrals we receive for our supported housing and Individual Support (ISP) programs are for young people turning 18 in residential care. Our submission calls on governments to ensure all young people exiting residential out-of-home care receive the option of accessing independent supported housing up until the age of 21.

4.3 Culturally appropriate housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to experience insecure housing, live in overcrowded houses and experience homelessness, including intergenerational homelessness, than

³⁹ Duncan, L. (2022). Behind the Line: Poverty and disadvantage in Australia 2022 Focus on the States Series No.9/22. [\(Weblink\)](#) p.28

⁴⁰ Jesuit Social Services. (2022). Federal Election Platform. [\(Weblink\)](#)

⁴¹ Australian Institute of Family Studies. (No date) Supporting young people leaving out-of-home care. [\(Weblink\)](#)

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Mendes, P. (2022, May 9). *Homelessness is common for teens leaving out-of-home-care. We need to extend care until they are at least 21.* The Conversation. [\(Weblink\)](#)

non-Indigenous Australians.⁴⁴ For example, in 2020–21, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up over a quarter (28 per cent) of people assisted by specialist homelessness services.⁴⁵ This is despite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people making up around 3.1 per cent of the Australian population.^{46 47}

Jesuit Social Services supports ACOSS’ call for a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing strategy to boost the stock of culturally safe and affordable housing. A national strategy is urgently needed to address the acute housing challenges facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We highlight the [Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework](#) as a positive example that could be drawn on.

4.4 Ecological justice and housing

It is critical that social and affordable housing is fit for purpose. While environmental factors are not at the forefront of discussions of disadvantage, our DOTE data has shown that there is a strong relationship between poorer quality natural environments and other indicators of disadvantage. In Melbourne’s west, for example, there is a strong relationship between heat stress, experiences of housing stress and overcrowding in certain areas.⁴⁸

Communities experiencing disadvantage are often the least responsible for environmental risks and threats, like climate change, but are the hardest hit by them, which in turn exacerbates vulnerability.⁴⁹ Recognising this stark injustice, Jesuit Social Services has woven an ecological justice perspective into the fabric of its work. This perspective acknowledges that the social is deeply intertwined with the environmental, and seeks to achieve a just society by simultaneously addressing the challenges facing the environment as well as social inequities experienced by marginalised communities.

Jesuit Social Services is concerned that some of the existing housing stock in Australia is ill-adapted to meet the growing pressures of climate change.⁵⁰ For example, research undertaken by Mallee Family Care and the University of Sydney in the Victorian town of Mildura found that public housing is commonly “substandard and unsafe and poorly adapted to high temperatures”.⁵¹ These added stressors increase the incidence of family violence and substance misuse, and significantly affect the mental health of tenants.

Jesuit Social Services welcomes the recent Federal Budget announcement of a National Housing Accord which includes \$350 million to build 10,000 affordable homes over five years from 2024, in addition to the \$10 billion Housing Australia Future Fund which will build 30,000 new social and

⁴⁴ AIHW. (2019). Specialist Homelessness Services annual report 2018-19. ([Weblink](#))

⁴⁵ AIHW. (2021). Specialist Homelessness Services annual report 2020-21. ([Weblink](#))

⁴⁶ ABS. (2019). Australian demographic statistics, Jun 2019. ABS Cat. No. 3101.0. Canberra: ABS

⁴⁷ For additional data in relation to housing and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, please see the Appendix.

⁴⁸ Dunn, K., Wolf, A., Moloney, S., Lansley, D., Hewitt, T., Cigdem-Bayram, M. and Gooder, H. (2022). Mobilising Climate Just and Resilient Communities in Melbourne’s West: Collaborative Action Plan, Jesuit Social Services: Melbourne, 31.

⁴⁹ Jesuit Social Services. (2018). Ecological Justice: Expanding the Conversation. ([Weblink](#))

⁵⁰ Wade, M., Gooder, H., & Flook, N. (2021). Health, housing and ecological justice: Climate change and preventing homelessness deaths. *Parity*, 34(7), 41-43.

⁵¹ Lander, J., Breth-Petersen, M., Moait, R., Forbes, C. and Stephens, L., Dickson, M. (2019). Extreme heat driven by the climate emergency: Impacts on the health and wellbeing of public housing tenants in Mildura, Victoria ([Weblink](#))

affordable housing properties.⁵² Importantly, it also includes a target to build one million well-located and energy-efficient homes over the same period.

It is essential that Federal Government partners with state and territory governments to retrofit all existing social housing with energy efficient upgrades. Further, we emphasise the need for effective implementation of climate-safe and energy-efficient design in the planning and construction of all new public and community housing, and for this to be enshrined in legislation.

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Prioritise investment in new social housing as part of the National Housing Accord, with a particular focus on increasing the stock of safe, sustainable and energy-efficient public housing, and partnering with state and territory governments to retrofit all existing social housing with energy efficiency upgrades.
- Increase Commonwealth Rent Assistance for the thousands of Australians in chronic rental stress.
- Commit funding to state and territory governments to increase the range and availability of supported housing options for different groups of people with multiple and complex needs – including specific initiatives for young people, single people, women, people with experience of trauma, people exiting prison and out-of-home care, and people with mental ill-health.
- Ensure all young people exiting residential out-of-home care receive the option of accessing independent supported housing up until the age of 21.
- Commit to a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing strategy.

5. Gender justice

There are clear links between gender, poverty and wider disadvantage. Inequalities between men and women are an important source of social exclusion and access to resources. This gender-based injustice has been described as ‘the feminisation of poverty’.

*The feminisation of poverty should be viewed as the consequence of various structural factors including stereotypes, existing gender pay gaps, barriers caused by the lack of reconciliation between family life and work, the longer life expectancy of women and, in general, the various types of gender discrimination, which mostly affect women.*⁵³

The feminisation of poverty is particularly evident in women’s incomes and the gender pay gap. At the most basic level, whether women have an income of their own at all is an important indicator of gender equality, and is also linked to economic inequality in the form of relative poverty.⁵⁴ Where women do have their own income, average and lifetime earnings are lower than those of men due to a combination of factors – including more part-time work, gender employment segregation and the feminisation of many lower-paid jobs, and the unequal division of housework and caring

⁵² Department of Treasury. (2022). Media release: National Housing Accord: working together to help tackle housing challenges. ([Weblink](#))

⁵³ European Institute for Gender Equality. (2017). Poverty. ([Weblink](#))

⁵⁴ Nieuwenhuis, R. (2017). Gender equality and poverty are intrinsically linked. Inequality Matters: LIS Newsletter, (4), 4-6. ([Weblink](#))

responsibilities. In Australia, the evidence of gender inequality is stark. For example, data from the HILDA survey showed that in 2016, working age men spent 35.9 hours in paid employment and 13.3 hours on housework on average per week while working age women spent 24.9 hours on paid employment and 20.4 hours on housework on average per week, with 11.3 of these unpaid hours spent directly caring for children and disabled or elderly relatives.^{55 56}

Family violence is the most extreme expression of gender injustice and is a direct source of female poverty. A recent report by Anne Summers using data from the 2016 Personal Safety Survey specifically collated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that:⁵⁷

- 275,000 Australian women had suffered physical and/or sexual violence from a current partner. Almost 90,000 wanted to leave, but felt unable to do so, with a quarter saying the main reason they were unable to leave was a lack of money or financial support.
- Of the 275,000 women who had suffered family violence, only 85,800 were in full-time employment, and nearly 110,000 were either unemployed or not in the labour force and consequently without an income of their own.
- Single mothers experienced a far higher rate of violence than any other group of Australian women. 185,700 women with children aged under 18 were living as single mothers after leaving violent relationships. These women were married or in de facto relationships when the violence occurred and are single now because of the violence.
- 88,600 single mothers reported that their children had ‘seen or heard’ the violence, highlighting the risk of intergenerational perpetuation of violence.
- Although 60 per cent of the women who left violent relationships were employed, their earnings were insufficient to support their families and 50 per cent of them relied on government payments as their main source of income. Nearly half of these single mothers had income in the lowest quintile (\$460 or less a week in household income).
- Many could not pay their bills or heat their houses or register their cars. More than 17,000 women went without meals.

While family violence is often identified as a driver of poverty and insecure housing, rarely does the discussion go to the next step of placing a focus on early intervention and the behaviour of those who use violence - overwhelmingly boys and men. Jesuit Social Services has worked with men and boys for 45 years. We know that too many men and boys are in trouble and causing trouble. As a society we have begun to acknowledge the significant problem of violence against women and children. The focus has been, as it should be, on supporting the victims of this violence. But the need to do more led Jesuit Social Services to in 2017 establish [The Men’s Project](#). The Men’s Project focuses on supporting boys and men to live respectful, accountable and fulfilling lives, where they are able to develop loving relationships free from violence and contribute to safe and equal communities.

⁵⁵ Workplace Gender Equality Agency. (2019). *Gender Segregation in Australia’s Workforce* ([Weblink](#)) ; Monash University. (2022). Women, work and the poverty trap: Time for a fair go to support health and wellbeing for Australian women. *Lens*. ([Weblink](#))

⁵⁶ For further details, please see the Appendix.

⁵⁷ Summers, A. (2022). The Choice: Violence or Poverty. *University of Technology Sydney*. ([Weblink](#))

The ‘Man Box’

Our research shows that gender inequality and narrow, rigid gender stereotypes are bad for all of us, keeping women and men from living safe and healthy lives and contributing to violence and other harmful behaviours. Our Man Box study on being a young man in Australia was the first comprehensive study that focused on the attitudes to manhood and the behaviours of young Australian men aged 18 to 30. The findings shed a new light on the social pressures that young Australian men experience to be a ‘real man’ and the impact this can have on their wellbeing, behaviours and the safety of our wider community.⁵⁸ For example, the initial Man Box report found that almost half of men inside the ‘Man Box’ reported making sexual comments to women they didn’t know in a public place in the past month. This compared with seven per cent of men who did not endorse the rigid beliefs about masculinity represented by ‘The Man Box’.

A further report building on these initial findings – **Unpacking the Man Box** – found that young Australian men’s belief in rigid masculine stereotypes is a stronger indicator of whether they will use violence, sexually harass women, or experience mental ill-health themselves than other factors, including their education levels, where they live, or their cultural heritage.⁵⁹

We need to promote positive change around gender norms and stereotypes and what it means to be a healthy and respectful man, while also focusing on contributing factors to male violence like mental health problems, substance abuse, and social isolation.

5.1 Engaging men and boys to prevent violence

Acknowledging the critical need to prevent violence before it starts, The Men’s Project promotes positive and healthy masculinities to reduce violence and other harmful behaviours prevalent among boys and men. Our **MoRE (Modelling Respect and Equality) program** helps role models to be agents of change in their schools, clubs and communities. Our **Unpacking the Man Box workshops** provide a range of participants (social workers, wellbeing staff, teachers, students, early childhood educators, faith leaders and parents) with awareness of the negative consequences associated with outdated forms of masculinity and tools/resources to foster healthier forms of masculinity.

Internal evaluations of both of these programs found that participants report significant improvements in their knowledge and understanding of stereotypical constructions of masculinity, and in their confidence and motivation to affect change. We call on the Federal Government to invest in workforce capacity building to support people who work with boys and men to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote respect and equality.

⁵⁸ Irvine, H., Livingstone, M., Flood, M., Armytage, J., & Bunn, A., (2018). The Man Box: A study on being a young man in Australia. Jesuit Social Services. ([Weblink](#)).

⁵⁹ Tyler, M., McCabe, M., Flood, M., Busija, L., Tatangelo, G., Armytage, J., & Bunn, A. (2020). Unpacking the Man Box: What is the impact of the Man Box attitudes on young Australian men’s behaviours and well-being? Jesuit Social Services. ([Weblink](#)).

Case Study: Sam, Vice Principal at Padua College in Victoria participated in our MoRE workshops.

“A big takeaway from the workshop was the correlation between being stuck in the ‘Man Box’ and greater likelihood of negative outcomes such as challenging behaviour and poor wellbeing. We started looking at our own data and found that correlation as well. Our boys were demonstrating challenging behaviours at higher rates than our girls, yet also demonstrating lower levels of help-seeking behaviour and participation in positive connection and engagement opportunities. The MoRE project is giving us a new lens to think about how we encourage boys who are misbehaving to reflect and articulate themselves, how we model respect and equality, and how our existing and new school wellbeing and engagement programs support boys. With three campuses and almost 2,600 students, change is slow, but important. One simple example of change is that we’ve noticed teachers checking their biases around gendered language and masculine stereotypes.”

Additionally, The Men’s Project is currently supporting the implementation of the **Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) curriculum** in Victoria. Too often, teachers report a need for greater knowledge, skills and confidence in order to teach topics such as gendered violence, gender norms, power and privilege. In response, through a partnership with the Victorian Department of Education, we are engaging school leadership, teachers and other staff in capacity building programs to support more effective delivery of the RRRR curriculum and enable school staff to embed a whole of school approach. We expect the evaluation of the work will have implications for the Federal Government as well as states and territories.

5.2 Restorative approaches to adolescent family violence

Research from the Australian Institute of Criminology found that adolescents charged for a family violence related offence are more likely to be violent towards family members in adulthood (even relative to adolescents who had committed non-family violence offences). As the study notes “identifying the minority of adolescents who engage in domestic and family violence behaviours is a worthwhile intervention target, potentially preventing a substantial proportion of adult domestic and family violence offending.”⁶⁰

However, existing legislation and family violence response systems in Australia are largely geared towards adults and do not meet the complex needs of adolescents using violence who may have also experienced violence. Responses to police call-outs, at times, result in adolescent involvement with the criminal justice, out-of-home care and homelessness systems. This risks entrenching young people and their families in cycles of disadvantage. In response to this, Jesuit Social Services commenced the pilot of our program RESTORE in 2018 aiming to address adolescent violence in the home. The program is guided by restorative practice principles, providing a restorative process, and applies a

⁶⁰ Boxall H, Pooley K & Lawler S 2021. Do violent teens become violent adults? Links between juvenile and adult domestic and family violence. Trends & issues in crime and criminal justice no. 641. Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology. ([Weblink](#))

family systems, strengths-based, culturally sensitive and trauma-informed approach to working with all family members.⁶¹

To prevent young people from coming into contact with the out-of-home care, homelessness and justice systems, and to prevent the intergenerational impacts of family violence, we advocate for investment in adolescent family violence programs such as RESTORE as well as support and resourcing for police and courts to respond to the needs of adolescents who use violence in the home.

5.3 A federal social procurement policy

A further critical step towards gender equality is the use of social procurement frameworks to set and deliver on gender equality targets. The capacity for Federal Government procurement spending to contribute social value should be meaningfully pursued, including in relation to creating sustainable job opportunities for women. The size of government procurement contracts underlines the significant potential for a proportion of this spending to be targeted to achieve greater gender equity as well as driving recruitment of people who are long-term unemployed, have low skill levels and who live in areas of high social disadvantage. While Commonwealth Procurement Rules include reference to considerations such as environmental sustainability, decision-makers should also be required to consider social value and impact as part of procurement processes. The [Victorian Government's Social Procurement Framework](#) is a promising example that could be drawn upon that is resulting in significant early progress related to cultural change on work sites in order to meet female workforce participation targets.

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Provide coordinated, centralised and long-term investment for primary prevention education in schools across all states and territories.⁶²
- Invest in nationally coordinated data collection, research and evaluations to address the complex causes of family violence and inform evidence-based interventions, such as providing funding for the national roll-out of Jesuit Social Services' Adolescent Man Box Survey.
- Invest in workforce capacity building across organisations, based on our Man Box research, Modelling Respect and Equality program, and Unpacking the Man Box workshops, to support people who work with boys and men to challenge harmful stereotypes and promote respect and equality.
- Partner with state and territory governments to address the gap in service provision for adolescents using violence at home. Governments should commit to recurrent funding for adolescent family violence programs aligned with restorative principles.
- Implement a Federal Social Procurement Policy that includes clear and ambitious targets for creating meaningful employment opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage and addresses cultural issues related to the safety of women and other minority groups in male-dominated industries.

⁶¹ For further details, please see the Appendix.

⁶² This could include: expanding the Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships Curriculum to be delivered nation-wide; partnering with Jesuit Social Services to develop a survey of secondary school-aged students on issues related to consent drawing on the work completed to date through our Adolescent Man Box survey; and engaging Jesuit Social Services to facilitate knowledge sharing across state and territories based on our experience supporting the implementation of RRRR in Victoria.

6. Preventing contact with the criminal justice system

Jesuit Social Services believes that prison should only ever be used as a last resort. Despite this, Australia's prison population has risen significantly over the past decade, notwithstanding a slight decline in numbers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In September 2022, there were 40,907 people in prison with nearly 60 per cent having been in prison before.⁶³

A significant factor that influences whether a person will come into contact with the justice system is where they live. Our [Dropping off the Edge 2021 research](#) revealed that those living in the three per cent most disadvantaged communities in Victoria were nearly three times more likely to have high levels of prison admissions than people living in the remaining 97 per cent of communities, highlighting the localised nature of crime and entrenched disadvantage as an underlying cause of offending.⁶⁴ Further, in 2021, the Productivity Commission reported that the prison population came from disproportionately disadvantaged backgrounds compared to the general population due to factors including unemployment, lower educational levels, intergenerational incarceration, previous imprisonment, substance abuse and mental illness.⁶⁵

Over a five-year period from 2015 to 2020:⁶⁶

- 23 per cent of 25 to 34 year-old prison entrants were unemployed;
- 78 per cent of 25 to 34 year-old prison entrants had not completed high school;
- 5 per cent of prison entrants were sleeping rough or in non-conventional housing; and
- 29 per cent of prison entrants reported some limitation in participating in activity, employment or education.

Prisons are often traumatic environments that separate people from homes, families, and communities, compounding pre-existing disadvantage and increasing the need for support. Jesuit Social Services is particularly concerned about the disproportionate impact of imprisonment on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Urgent measures are needed to significantly reduce the number of people in prison and reserve prison as an option of last resort only.

6.1 Raise the age of criminal responsibility

A small number of children experiencing vulnerability enter the criminal justice system at a very young age. We know this group is among the most vulnerable in our community and that children detained between the ages of 10 and 14 are more likely, compared to those at older ages, to have sustained and frequent contact with the criminal justice system throughout their life.⁶⁷ Child offending experts, psychologists and other health experts agree that younger children have rarely developed the social,

⁶³ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2020). Corrective Services, Australia, June Quarter 2020. [\(Weblink\)](#)

⁶⁴ Tanton, R., Dare, L., Miranti, R., Vidyattama, Y., Yule, A. and McCabe, M. (2021), *Dropping Off the Edge 2021: Persistent and multilayered disadvantage in Australia*, Jesuit Social Services: Melbourne.

⁶⁵ Productivity Commission. (2021). *Australia's Prison Dilemma*. [\(Weblink\)](#)

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Jesuit Social Services (2013). *Thinking Outside: Alternatives to remand for children* [\(Weblink\)](#); Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2013). *Young people aged 10–14 in the youth justice system 2011–2012* [\(Weblink\)](#)

emotional and intellectual maturity necessary for legal responsibility before the age of 14 years, and lack the capacity to properly understand their culpability.

The current age of criminal responsibility disproportionately impacts children from vulnerable backgrounds, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are overrepresented in the number of children involved with the justice system who are aged under 14 years. In line with international standards embodied in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and enacted in many overseas jurisdictions⁶⁸, we call on the Federal Government to work with states and territories to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years.

Table: Age of criminal responsibility: international comparison⁶⁹

AUS	USA	FRA	SWE	NED	JPN
10	6-12	13	15	12	14

Our paper, [Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility: There is a Better Way](#), shows that this is clearly better for the children in question and for society as a whole. Funding for restorative justice, family-centred and therapeutic approaches to respond to children under 14 who come into contact with police is also required. We need responses that take account of their broader family and social circumstances, work with the child to help them to understand the impact of their behaviour and equip them with the tools to take a different path and prevent contact with the justice system. This requires governments to divert funding from youth justice systems towards community services, and child and family wellbeing services.

6.2 Restorative approaches for children and young people in out-of-home care

It is well established that there are strong links between children’s involvement in the child protection and out-of-home care systems and involvement in the justice system. Aboriginal children are a particularly vulnerable cohort of crossover children⁷⁰ being overrepresented at every level of child protection and youth justice involvement. Aboriginal crossover children are also more likely to be younger – 23 per cent were 10-13 years old at first sentence or diversion, compared to 11 per cent for non-Aboriginal children.⁷¹

We believe there is an opportunity to work in a better way with children who find themselves in challenging situations in out-of-home care settings. Currently these children have limited access to a therapeutic, diversionary, restorative based process to work through the issues they face. Out-of-home care systems across Australia urgently require reforms to meet the immediate needs of children, particularly to reduce reliance on police and stigmatising approaches that are punitive and treat children in care as offenders.

⁶⁸ Child Rights International Network (2016) Minimum ages of criminal responsibility around the world. ([Weblink](#))

⁶⁹ Hazel, N. (2008). Cross-national comparison of youth justice. London: Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

⁷⁰ Note: The term ‘crossover children’ has been used in research to describe children with involvement in both the criminal justice and the child protection systems.

⁷¹ Sentencing Advisory Council (2020). [Crossover Kids](#): Vulnerable Children in the Youth Justice System, Report 2: Children at the Intersection of Child Protection and Youth Justice across Victoria.

As part of this, we strongly believe that restorative practices such as group conferencing should be expanded and made available to children in out-of-home care placements. Restorative practices have the potential to address behavioural issues for children in out-of-home care and prevent their criminalisation whilst in care. More broadly, Jesuit Social Services strongly supports calls for governments to increase investment in prevention and early intervention support services for families experiencing vulnerability.⁷²

6.3 A National First-Nations led Justice Reinvestment Body

Jesuit Social Services is deeply concerned about the significantly higher rates at which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are incarcerated. The impacts of colonisation, racism and dispossession continue to be felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities across Australia today, and over-representation in the justice system must be understood as a result of this. In 2022, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults were almost 12 times more likely to be imprisoned than adults in the general population. Aboriginal children were also nine times more likely to be in custody than their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Jesuit Social Services welcomes the inclusion of justice targets as part of the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap which seek to reduce incarceration rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults and young people. However, it is critical that the adoption of justice targets is accompanied by community-driven solutions to address disadvantage, with justice reinvestment adopted as a key approach. Jesuit Social Services therefore supports the call for a National Justice Reinvestment Body as recommended by the Australian Law Reform Commission's landmark Pathways to Justice Report and supported by Change the Record. The establishment of a national Justice Reinvestment Body that embodies Aboriginal leadership and expertise at all levels would have a significant positive impact on the lives of First Nations peoples and communities.

6.4 Leaving prison for good: Supported transitional housing

Having stable and affordable housing can make a significant difference in the life of a person leaving prison and whether they reoffend, yet almost one-third of people exit the justice system into homelessness.⁷³ Post-release support, including transitional facilities, are critical to ensuring that individuals do not exit prison into homelessness or unsuitable housing.⁷⁴

For many years, Jesuit Social Services has provided supported housing for justice system-involved young people through our Perry House, Dillon House – Next Steps, and Link Youth Justice Housing programs.⁷⁵ More recently, we have partnered with the Victorian Government to launch the **Maribyrrnong Community Residential Facility** for men exiting prison. Several residents at Maribyrrnong have already demonstrated that with the right supports in place they are able to settle into community life, look for work and plan a better future. Feedback from participants during the first 12 months of the program's operation has been extremely positive. One participant has provided feedback that the support of staff at the facility has been crucial in helping him to turn his life around: "They have not only provided me the environment to recover, but also enabled me to accelerate my ability and hope to return to a normal life and a career."

⁷² SNAICC. (2022). Media release: Children need commitment in this election contest ([Weblink](#))

⁷³ AIHW (2019). The Health of Prisoners 2018. ([Weblink](#))

⁷⁴ AIHW (2019). Specialist Homelessness Services annual report 2018-19. ([Weblink](#))

⁷⁵ See here for further details: ([Weblink](#))

Initiatives such as the Maribyrnong Community Residential Facility demonstrate how providing a secure place for someone to live can enable them to access health services and learning and employment pathways to ultimately provide both short and long-term benefits. We also continue to call on all Australian governments to invest more in transitional and long-term housing options to give people exiting the justice system the best chance to get their lives back on track and to build safer, more just communities.

We call on the Federal Government to:

- Invest in a coordinated approach to raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14 across all states and territories.
- Increase investment in prevention and early intervention support services for families experiencing vulnerability, and provide restorative approaches for young people in challenging situations in out-of-home care.
- Resource a National Justice Reinvestment Body with Aboriginal leadership and expertise to divert funds away from the justice system towards community-led and evidence-based solutions as recommended by Change the Record.
- Partner with state and territory governments to increase targeted, specialised and holistic packages of housing and support for people whose multiple and complex needs are not met through the private rental market or community housing systems.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Further analysis of poverty and disadvantage in Australia

Based on data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, the Organisation for Economic and Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2019 found that, while poverty had decreased over the first decade and a half of the twenty-first century, Australia still had above-average poverty rates among OECD countries. It identified a range of groups with a heightened risk of poverty.⁷⁶ Not surprisingly, employment, or the lack of it, was a major determinant. People not in the labour force faced a much higher risk of poverty. But there was also poverty among people in work, particularly casual and part-time workers. Sole parents and people living alone faced 'quite a high risk of poverty, even if they are employed'. People with low education faced a higher risk. Age was also a factor. Older adults had a greater than 30 per cent chance of living in poverty, one of the highest rates in the OECD. However, poverty amongst older people is not simply a function of age but more a reflection of other determinants including not being in the labour force, lower education levels and a greater chance of being in a one person household. People not born in Australia, and people living in regional and remote areas were more likely to be living in poverty. And Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were almost twice as likely as non-Indigenous Australians to be experiencing

⁷⁶ Sila, U., & Dugain, V. (2019). Income Poverty of Households in Australia: Evidence from the HILDA Survey OECD Economics Department working papers no. 1539. ([Weblink](#))

disadvantage, even after controlling for education, age, industry, skill and geographical remoteness, pointing to the influence of other socio-economic factors including poor health and discrimination.⁷⁷

Children are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of poverty. Using a poverty measure of \$451.50 per person per week (based on half the median per capita household income adjusted for family size and after housing costs), Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre (BCEC)⁷⁸ estimated that of the nearly three million people living in poverty, almost 750,000 were children. This most likely underestimates the true extent of poverty as it included COVID-19 support payments. More disturbing still, there were more than 190,000 children among the nearly one million people living on \$270 per week or less after housing costs.

Of particular concern, BCEC found that childhood poverty has a long term scarring effect.

People who experience childhood poverty are up to eight percentage points more likely to remain in poverty in adult life. The chances of securing future employment after a poverty in childhood are up to 11 percentage points lower compared to those who did not come from a poor childhood background, and they are significantly more likely to suffer from nervousness or feel unhappy with their lives for up to 10 years after leaving home.

Similar to the OECD, BCEC also identified unemployment as a major source of poverty. It also found single parent households, as well as people in social housing and people with a disability were most exposed to 'deep and persistent poverty and disadvantage'. The report also revealed a pronounced gender gap in poverty, with young women and women over 55 particularly exposed to financial hardship. Further, a significant number of people in work were still experiencing disadvantage – one in five people in poverty were in low paid jobs.

Appendix 2: Barriers to education and training

Access to quality education can be particularly difficult for people in regional, rural and remote locations. The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training's report *Education in Remote and Complex Environments*⁷⁹ highlighted a range of obstacles reducing the choices available across all levels of education to people living outside the main population centres.

Students of all ages in more remote areas can face a range of barriers. Early learning is limited due to a lack of community-based early childhood programs, the challenges facing the delivery of mobile early learning services (such as extreme weather and poor roads), and the shortage of appropriately trained staff. Barriers to older age education include a lack of fulltime education services, inadequate public and private transport, and a restricted range of subjects available to study.

The impact of these impediments manifests in a variety of ways. Leaving home to attend boarding school in response to the limitations of remote education can place emotional and mental stress on both students and their families. More generally, compared to their peers in metropolitan areas,

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Duncan. A. (2022). Behind the Line: Poverty and disadvantage in Australia 2022. Focus on the States Series No.9/22 ([Weblink](#)) pp.7-11

⁷⁹ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment. (2020). Education and Training Education in Remote and Complex Environments. ([Weblink](#))

students in more remote areas are less likely to complete secondary schooling, and less likely to either apply for higher education or accept a university offer. They are also more likely to not complete tertiary education. Poorer education options and outcomes, in turn, perpetuate the greater disadvantage already present in more remote areas including, on average, poorer health and higher levels of poverty.

An increasingly important barrier to education is the unequal opportunity to access adequate and reliable information and communication technology.⁸⁰ An important reason for the digital divide is the cost of devices and internet connection. This can limit or completely exclude lower income households from the education benefits of internet access, further exacerbating disadvantage and inequality. Problems of affordability and access are even more acute in remote areas where the only option may be expensive and less reliable satellite internet, and where qualified information technology people are rare.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities face even greater educational hurdles. These communities already often experience inadequate income, food and energy insecurity, poor housing, extreme environmental conditions and high rates of preventable diseases. This background of deprivation and hardship creates significant obstacles to achieving good educational outcomes. As the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation has observed:

Disadvantage impedes families' ability to afford and access health services, resulting in students experiencing poorer health outcomes than their peers, including hearing loss which impedes learning. Overcrowding contributes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' psychological stress and related behavioural problems, and impedes their ability to do homework, remain healthy and get adequate sleep and support to succeed at school.⁸¹

Appendix 3: Housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are more likely to experience insecure housing, live in overcrowded houses and experience homelessness, including intergenerational homelessness, than non-Indigenous Australians.⁸²

- 10.2 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people owned their home outright (2018-19) compared to 32 per cent of all Australian households (2021).
- Social housing is particularly important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In 2018-19, one third (33.6 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people rented social housing.
- Social housing is particularly important in remote areas. In 2018-19, nearly 71 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in remote areas were living in social housing, compared to 24.6 per cent in non-remote areas.
- There was greater satisfaction with community housing (80 per cent) compared to State owned and managed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing (66 per cent).
- Despite this, the standard of housing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is low. In

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2021). Indigenous housing. [\(Weblink\)](#); Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2022). Home ownership and housing tenure. [\(Weblink\)](#)

2018-19 one in five (20 per cent) of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households lived in dwellings that lacked at least one basic household facility or had more than two major structural problems. Another third were living in houses with at least one major structural problem. And 9.1 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households did not have access to working facilities for food preparation. Again, the most remote housing was consistently the poorest quality.

- There has been a reduction in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in overcrowded housing – from 27.2 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 2004-05 to 17.9 per cent in 2018-19. However, this compares to 4.9 per cent of non-Indigenous Australians in overcrowded housing, and still equates to around 145,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in inappropriately sized housing in 2018-19.

Appendix 4: Understanding gender inequity

- Women earn around \$255 per week less than men.
- Australian women’s ranking on the Global Gender Gap Index in 2021 fell from 44 to 50 (behind Zimbabwe and Montenegro).
- Women are paid less than men in male-dominated and female dominated employment classifications.
- Employees in female-dominated organisations have lower salaries on average, for both base salary and total remuneration, when compared to male-dominated organisations.

Using data from the HILDA survey, Bruce Chapman and Matt Taylor found that women who leave violent relationships are financially much worse off than women who leave a relationship for reasons other than partner violence.⁸³ While separation is associated with a considerable loss in income for all women (between 17 and 45 per cent regardless of their parental status), women who have experienced partner violence experience a much larger average loss of income (between 14 and 28 percentage points) whether they have children or not. Despite the limitations of the data, Chapman and Taylor concluded that ‘the evidence points solidly to the conclusion that [partner violence] is a key contributor to significant material disadvantage for those affected’.

Family violence acts as a barrier to gaining or maintaining employment in a variety of ways including through psychological stress, harassment or other manipulative behaviours or further actual or threatened physical violence.⁸⁴ It also increases gender inequality and disadvantage by exacerbating homelessness for women and their children leaving a violent relationship due to the shortage of safe and affordable housing. The shortage of suitable housing for the victim-survivors of family violence also forces some women to stay in, or return to, a violent relationship.⁸⁵

And because of their extremely limited options, women without work become even more vulnerable to family violence when there is social and economic disruption due to natural disasters such as

⁸³ Chapman, B. & Taylor, M. (2022). Partner Violence and the Financial Well-Being of Women: HILDA Research Results ([Weblink](#))

⁸⁴ Satyanathan, D. & Pollack, A. (2015). Domestic Violence and Poverty: Michigan Family Impact Seminars. ([Weblink](#))

⁸⁵ Flanagan K, Blunden H, valentine k, and Henriette J (April 2019) *Housing outcomes after domestic and family violence* AHURI pp. 67-69 ([Weblink](#))

bushfires or the COVID-19 pandemic.⁸⁶ A range of studies have found that family violence either started or increased in frequency during the pandemic due to a range of factors possibly including financial stress, changes in employment status and other family and household stresses.⁸⁷

There is growing recognition of the need to address the root causes gendered violence, sexism and sexual harassment. The best available evidence suggests a key way to achieve this is through primary prevention efforts that promote cultural and attitudinal change related to masculinities and gender. Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins' report *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces* echoes this and advocates for strategies that promote gender equality by recognising and shifting the gendered drivers that underpin sexual harassment.⁸⁸ Similarly, the Victorian Government's 2021 Building Equality Policy details the need for 'respectful workplace training to all workers throughout the subcontracting supply chain.' It encourages actions which 'promote diversity of thinking, to challenge the status quo and achieve innovative outcomes' with an overarching goal of 'disrupt(ing) the existing gender stereotypes, norms and roles in the construction sector.' The Victorian Government's emphasis on women's equality and safety as one of seven social procurement objectives is also beginning to have an important impact on workplace practices and culture.

Appendix 5: RESTORE – Jesuit Social Services' adolescent family violence program

RESTORE operates in the Family Division of the Melbourne Children's Court. It offers a Family Group Conference process for young people using violence in the home to assist them and their affected family members to address and prevent the violence. The program seeks to address the ensuing harm caused by the violence and prevent future harm from occurring. Importantly, the process of preparing for a Conference seeks to build trust and empathy and identify supports that the family may benefit from. As most of the adolescents we support through RESTORE have themselves experienced violence in the home, we focus on taking a holistic approach by also working with their immediate family.

⁸⁶ Cathy Humphreys 'Poverty is Trapping Women in Abusive Relationships' ([Weblink](#)) See also Tammy Henson 'Poverty, Domestic Violence, and the COVID-19 Pandemic' GGU Law Digital Commons (April 2020) ([Weblink](#))

⁸⁷ Anthony Morgan and Hayley Boxall *Economic insecurity and intimate partner violence in Australia during the COVID-19 pandemic* ANROWS (January 2022) ([Weblink](#))

⁸⁸ Australian Human Rights Commission [AHRC]. (2020). *Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces*, Australian Human Rights Commission: Sydney