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Key College, A School for Homeless Youth: A Follow-up of Ex-students.

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Abstract

Homelessness has a detrimental impact on health, social, and economical outcomes. Although homelessness affects all groups, young people have the highest rates and are the age group most at risk of experiencing homelessness. Interventions which seek to address youth homelessness are varied and many have not undergone rigorous evaluation. One approach to intervention is to improve homeless youths' ability to engage with society and through employment. Employment improves economic resources which in turn supports housing stability. However homeless youth may lack the skills to obtain and maintain employment and therefore education and training is an important step towards this goal. This study sought to follow up ex-students of an alternative education programme for homeless youth located in Sydney Australia. Thirty one participants consented to their involvement and were administered an online survey. The survey examined ex-students' current situations in terms of employment/education, housing, finances, life satisfaction, and their perspectives of their time at Key College. The results show 38% of those surveyed are still homeless, 64% are unemployed, 55% are living below the poverty line, 73% are satisfied with their lives overall, and almost all participants expressed positive perspectives of Key College. The results were compared to data sets of comparable populations. It was concluded that although the ex-students remain disadvantaged, they have made considerable progress towards stabilising their lives.

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List of Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing
EET	Employment, Education, and Training
FHCSIA	Family, Housing, Community Services, and Indigenous Affairs
MIAESR	Melbourne Institute of Applied Economics and Social Research
NAHA	National Affordable Housing Agreement
NYC	National Youth Commission
YOTS	Youth Off The Streets

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