



## Children without Homes

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“Homelessness meant for me an unstable life for me and my kids”, says Natalie\*, a mother of two whose family is struggling to find permanent housing after escaping domestic violence.

“For me and my family to have a permanent home I need permanent employment, access to the rental market and a safe neighbourhood to live in. I am really looking forward to me and my kids not having to be transient and having a permanent home. My hope is to own my own house with acreage for my kids to have animals”, says Natalie.

With 1 in 4 homeless Australians under the age of 18, the high number of homeless children is being highlighted with a photo exhibition in West End for National Homeless Persons' Week.

Photographer Katie Bennett took the portraits of 20 families who are currently or were recently homeless. The portraits by will be revealed at a children's party-themed event on **Thursday 4 August**.

The event is hosted by Brisbane's Micah Projects which provides services to an ever increasing number of families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

“The national data on people accessing homelessness services shows that far too many children and their families are without a decent place to live and services are struggling with the demand,” says Karyn Walsh, Coordinator of Micah Projects.

“23% of Australia's homeless are children but 80% of families who need support are turned away because the services due to limited capacity,” says Karyn.

“In the last financial year, 640 families with 869 children homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, including 244 children under 4 years of age, presented to Micah Projects for services. We were able to support only 230 families (with 515 children) with support and advocacy for their housing, health, education and parenting”, says Karyn.

“We're hoping the exhibition will bring to light the faces of some of the families who experience homelessness in Brisbane.

“The photographs capture the positivity of the families' connectedness and spirit, even though having experienced the hardships of homelessness. There will also be several short stories of some of the families' experiences of homelessness. Most of the families will attend as this will be a social event, with food and activities for the children”, says Karyn.

**Children and Families Photographic Exhibition will be held at Caterpillar House, 111 Vulture St, West End on Thursday 4 August 11am-1pm.**

For more information contact:

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\*Not her real name