



**Homelessness Week**  
**2017**  
*Action and Innovation*

**7 August 2017 HIDDEN HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE**

To mark Homelessness Week 2017, Homelessness Australia and Council to Homeless Persons have analysed Australian Institute of Health and Welfare data to expose trends in ‘hidden’ forms of homelessness.

Just 6% of all homelessness is rough sleeping; the vast majority of homelessness is hidden. This data shows that hidden forms of homelessness are rising rapidly as the impact of the housing affordability crisis affects people on the lowest incomes.

Homelessness Australia has launched a campaign called *End the Housing Crisis* ([www.endthehousingcrisis.org.au](http://www.endthehousingcrisis.org.au)), calling on the Federal Government to deliver 100,000 new public and community housing properties over five years.

**Couch surfing**

Last year, over 40,000 Australians who were couch surfers sought homelessness assistance; a 46% increase over four years.

***Older women couchsurfing***

- 83% rise in the number of women aged 50+ who are couchsurfing over the last 4 years

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	4yr % increase
Women aged 50+ couchsurfing	885	1054	1364	1618	83%

***Children couchsurfing***

- Last year, 6,383 children aged 0-17 years who sought assistance from homelessness services were couch surfing; up 55% in 4 years

**Sleeping in cars**

- Last year 5,473 people sought assistance from homelessness services who were sleeping in their cars; a 60% increase in 4 years
- There has been a 75% increase in women aged 55+ sleeping in their cars, presenting at homelessness services

**Table: Australians sleeping in their cars who sought assistance from homelessness services**

Sleeping in cars	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	4 yr % increase
No. of clients (all ages)	3410	4501	5000	5473	60%

**Rooming houses**

- Rooming houses are often a last resort for people squeezed out of private rental. There has been a 23% increase in the number of older people seeking assistance from homelessness services who are living in rooming houses

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	4 yr % increase
Aged 50+ in rooming houses	1033	1147	1168	1273	23%

