

A NEW PLACE TO CALL HOME



KEY MESSAGES

KIDS UNDER COVER
LONG-TERM STUDIO IMPACT REPORT



BACKGROUND

Dr Paul Stolz, a researcher from Swinburne University led a research project to investigate the long-term impact of Kids Under Cover's Studio Program on young people and their families. The research sought to clarify whether the long-term impact of the studio on social and educational development, future aspiration, physical and mental health and employment possibilities align with the claimed benefits of the program.

This key messages document provides a snapshot of the main findings. Further details and information are available in our full report, available at kuc.org.au

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN AUSTRALIA

- Homelessness does not necessarily mean rooflessness.
- Symptomatic circumstances of homelessness can be experienced within the boundaries of home.
- Addressing these symptomatic circumstances can have an impact on young peoples' lives.

“ Youth homelessness remains a problem in Australia despite significant media and policy attention over almost three decades. ”

— Dr Paul Stolz

IMPACT ON FAMILY RELATIONS

- More stable family relations increased the sense of belonging and of being at home and increased the desire to remain at home.
- Risk of homelessness was reduced in families who participated in the research, where there was risk of premature departure from home for the young person due to family breakdown.

“The girls did not see the house as a home. It was just chaos. The house was the bare essentials. You could not go anywhere in the house to get space. It was horrible. I did not want to be in the house and the kids probably felt the same. The studio turned the house back into a home.”

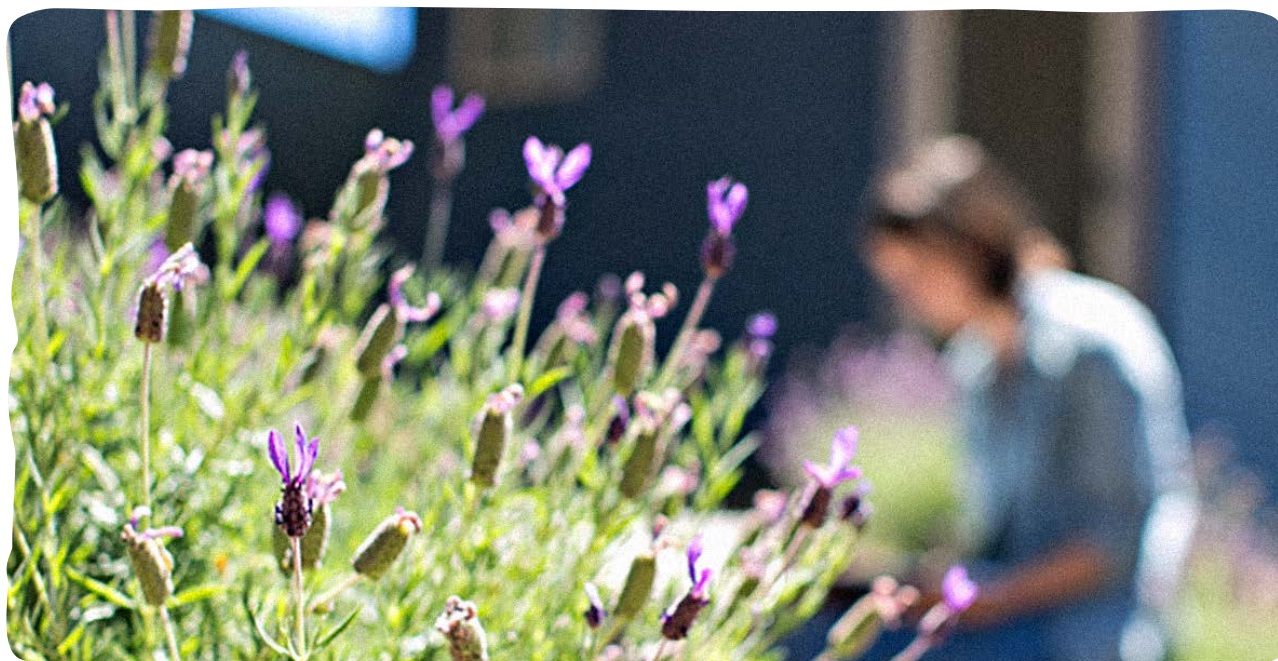
— Carer of studio recipients

IMPACT ON PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Relief from the visceral experience of crowding can be had from the provision of a studio. This has better mental health impacts for the whole family.
- Young people with mental health issues, particularly depression, can experience dramatic improvement from studio provision.

“He now has a sense of pride in what he has and what he does. He cares for his world. His pride stems 100% from the provision of the studio. Since he has had the studio, I have seen his life come back tenfold.”

— Mother of studio recipient



SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Young people and families who participated in the research consistently remarked on the studio providing a renewed sense of home leading to greater social and educational development.
- Gradual independence is encouraged by the separation of the studio from the main house.
- The space of the studio provides for privacy and a quiet place that aids study and educational achievement.

“ I want to make a fresh start and go back to Year 12 and focus on what I want to do. The studio has helped me in this aim. I want to make something of myself. ”

— Young person and studio recipient

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND ASPIRATIONS

- Safe entry into the public sphere of education, employment and independence is premised on the symbolic elements of home being foundational and positive.
- The additional space of the studio can provide these foundational elements of home that allows development and aspiration to flourish for young people.

“ The studio gave me independence, privacy, a place to study. The independence and success I had helped me to become more independent. It has helped me in succeeding in my current career. ”

— Young person and studio recipient

ABOUT KIDS UNDER COVER

Kids Under Cover provides young people at risk of homelessness the foundations to strengthen their connection to family, community and education, and make a lasting difference in their lives.