

Trent's Story

This story is to be read in conjunction with Launch Housing's teaching resource for high school students.



Like most 18-year-old students, Trent has great aspirations to create a global empire and own a private island. He has faced and continues to face many hurdles in his marathon to achieving his dreams. With an optimistic yet inquisitive mindset, Trent presents as an incredibly mature and kind-hearted teenager with a passion for business and interest in the sport industry. What one may not notice on first glance, however, is that he was once one of the 28,000 young people who experience homelessness in Australia (ABS Census 2016).

Trent is a student living at one of the [Education First Youth Foyers](#). This is his story.



“At 14, after my mum died, the strained relationship I had with my dad, who worked in the Air Force, deteriorated even further.

Having to suddenly step up into an adult role, I was teaching him simple tasks such as paying bills and lodging taxes. In January last year, our relationship completely broke down and I was told to leave and not look back.

I had no money and only a small suitcase of belongings to my name. So, I couch surfed for a while between my sister, friends, one grandparent in Tasmania and another in New Zealand. I was also occasionally sleeping rough or staying at refuges.

It was during this time that both of my grandparents passed on the same night. I was heartbroken. I went to Tasmania for my Pop's funeral before joining my sister in New Zealand. Not too long afterwards, my sister recommended I see a psychologist. That's when I was finally able to move forward and work on my challenges.

My social worker from another non-profit youth homelessness organisation then encouraged me to apply to the Education First Youth Foyers and in August last year I was approved.

For the first time that year, I had safe and stable accommodation. At first, getting back on my feet and creating new friendships was extremely difficult. Because of my life experience, relating to others my age wasn't easy.

It has taken time and effort, but I've now got another family. They're not blood relations, we're so much closer than that. I've also created friendships through the Foyer's 'Men's Group'.

This is where the males at the Education First Youth Foyers are able to socialise together. Tonight for example, we are all meeting to play ten pin bowling and go out for dinner.

Every experience is different, but never be afraid to ask for help. Even when I was at my lowest, there was still people who were there for me and have helped me to get to where I am today.

I did struggle settling back into education after my experience with homelessness and coping with my mental health at the same time. It was something I needed to do and it helped me gain control of my life.



Utilising the Education First Youth Foyer's education services, I am in the midst of completing a barista traineeship with [RMIT](#) and [Society Melbourne](#) with their "Coffee Cart Changing Lives" initiative. I'm also doing a Diploma of Leadership and Management and a Bachelor of Business majoring in Sports Management.

While I do love Melbourne as a city, I want to explore what else the world has to offer. I hope to move to the United States to complete my Master's at the University of Oregon and work in the sport industry there.

My first priority though is to manage my mental health. Once that's done, nothing can stop me."