

The CEO of one of Tasmania's largest community organisations, Colony 47, has welcomed the Premier's new agenda for the State.

With commitments to areas such as homelessness and support for children and families, Therese Taylor believes the Government realises the critical situation our State is in. Although impossible to give exact numbers, it's believed there are about 100 people who are homeless every night in Tasmania and family units are breaking down more than ever.

"Last year, Colony 47 provided crisis accommodation for 571 people and that's only 1 in every 3 who come to us for assistance. The situation is dire. There's a general perception in the community that homeless people are just useless drunks and drug addicts who spend their welfare dollars on supporting their habits. But it's not" says Ms Taylor. "These days, young children are living on the streets. They're being abused at home or have been abandoned by their parents. Whole families, even some with newborn babes, are struggling to put a roof over their heads; unemployment, lack of public housing, increasing rents in the private rental market due to ever-increasing interest rates. They all contribute to homelessness".

Premier Lennon has announced the recruitment of New York housing expert, Rosanne Haggerty to help maximize the benefits from the Government's recent \$60 million housing funding injection. Ms Taylor hopes Mr Lennon will call on organisations such as Colony 47 to meet with Ms Haggerty. "While we acknowledge that Ms Haggerty is a world expert in this field, we believe it is crucial that community organisations which deal with the issue of homelessness on a daily basis, will be able to speak with her and share our knowledge, before any major decisions are made".

Ms Taylor also welcomed the Premier's commitment to improving support and care to children and families. "Support doesn't just mean housing. There are major issues these days with the emotional development of many of our children and young people. There's education, health, child abuse, the list goes on. It's wonderful that Mr Lennon and the Government acknowledge these issues and are working towards a better future for our children".

"As the Premier says, today's children are tomorrow's Tasmania".

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For more information about Colony 47 check our website [www.colony47.com.au](http://www.colony47.com.au).