



**Northern Rivers Echo
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press clip

Brekkie after surf

Funds for homeless

WOULD you be surprised to know that on any given night in our county 26,000 children and young people are homeless? Around half of them are sleeping on people's floors or couches.

In Lismore, in the last three months of 2016 almost 200 young people (aged 16-25) presented to the Connecting Home program run by Social Futures.

Over a quarter of these young people were under 18 years old, a quarter were alone with no adult carer or friend to support them, one fifth were studying and a quarter of them had no income whatsoever.

Youth from Lismore headspace and the Tropical Fruits youth group, Fresh fruits, are joining forces to highlight the issue of youth homelessness in our region and to help raise vital funds for the Connecting Home Youth program by couch surfing overnight during National Youth Week.

"We want to help to change people's perceptions about youth homelessness. A lot of people think that young people leave home because they want to. But many don't have a choice.

More than 70% of youth who are homeless are escaping situations of domestic and family violence" said Niki Gill, Manager of the First Response and Youth Team for Connecting Home.

Community members are being encouraged to join the couch surfers in the morning for bacon and egg breakfast burgers where local troubadour, Luke Vassella will be providing some tunes.

"The brekky cook off will take place at the Lismore PCYC on Tuesday April 4 from 7.30 -9.30am and we're encouraging everyone to come to work a little early and stop by the PCYC to help raise funds for a vital

cause," said Niki.

"We will also be launching a raffle with some awesome prizes, generously donated by local businesses. The two major prizes include a gorgeous linen covered 'Tivoli' sofa bed valued at \$800 donated by Fantastic Furniture, and a night's accommodation for two in a luxury suite with breakfast valued at \$500 generously donated by The Byron at Byron Resort and Spa."

All of the money raised will go to the Connecting Home Youth Program to buy emergency accommodation for young people.

[Lismore PCYC Tuesday April 4 at 7.30am](#)



NORTHERN Rivers musician Luke Vassella to perform at PCYC breakfast. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED