

Let's work on getting jobs for our youth

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A TASKFORCE should be established to boost the job prospects of young people in the wake of COVID-19, South Australia's Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly says.

"We need a targeted employment strategy for teenagers and young people," she said. "We need jobs in the whole economy but we have had job targets and a job focus for decades and the youth unemployment rate remains twice as high as anyone else."

"Without a targeted approach, I don't think we are going to get through it."

Ms Connolly said the issue of job security for young people was raised while compiling a recently released report, *Reflections on COVID-19*.

"Many young people said they believed the long-term social and economic impact of COVID-19 would be felt well into the future, and that this would have a disproportionate effect not only on their generation but also on the one that follows them," she said.

"They want the option of going on to university, finding full-time employment and accessing affordable housing."

Ms Connolly's comments coincide with the release of the first of a series of reports on the back of a survey of more than 7000 people by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Younger participants reported being the hardest hit by the pandemic, with 30 per cent of under-30s reporting a decrease in income, 21 per cent reporting job loss and 21 per cent reporting changes to their living arrangements.

AIFS director Anne Hollonds said: "People aged 18 to 29 were three times more likely to have asked for financial support from friends or family during COVID-19, and almost four times more likely to ask for help from government or NGOs."

"We know 21 per cent have changed their living arrangements and moved back home but what about the other 80 per cent? Not everyone can move back home."