

WINTER APPEAL 2022

SCHOOL KIT



**YOU CAN PROVIDE THE SUPPORT NEEDED FOR
FAMILIES TO ESCAPE THE VIOLENCE**

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Dear teachers and students,

We are pleased to provide this 2022 School Winter Appeal Kit to assist you and your school in participating in this year's Winter appeal.

Firstly, thank you for taking the time to promote the appeal to your school community. It will help fund the critical work we do every day.

The theme of this year's Winter Appeal is 'Stopping the violence starts with a safe place to sleep', focusing on the importance of providing safety to families and individuals fleeing domestic violence.

Reports of domestic violence have increased during the pandemic with demand for Vinnies assistance doing likewise. Last year alone Vinnies WA answered 31,316 calls for emergency assistance.

While family and domestic violence is the most common reason given by people seeking help through a specialist homelessness service, these services are unable to meet demand.

By helping families find a safe place to sleep, Vinnies is enabling them to escape the violence in their homes,

without enduring the trauma and pain of living on the streets.

In this pack you will find information about how your school can become involved with the Winter Appeal this year, including ways to give.

We've also included a link to Winter Appeal activities and speaking notes for an assembly.

**VINNIES IS COMMITTED
TO A MORE JUST AND
COMPASSIONATE
AUSTRALIA, WHERE NO
CHILD SHOULD HAVE
TO WONDER WHERE
THEY WILL SLEEP EACH
NIGHT.
WE ARE GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR SCHOOL'S
SUPPORT IN HELPING
US ACHIEVE THIS GOAL.**

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger please call police on 000.

On the back of this booklet is a list of family and domestic violence support helplines. For practical assistance, please contact our call centre 13 18 12.

If you would like Winter Appeal activities for the students please email me on youth@svdpwa.org.au

Kind regards,

Colin Krause

Youth Services Coordinator





CASE STUDY

LEAH'S STORY

Across Australia many parents and children are staying in dangerous situations, or finding themselves homeless, simply because they cannot afford to start again.

Trigger warning: This content deals with accounts of domestic and family violence and may be triggering for some readers.

Leah's story is shocking, as is the growing number of families who are experiencing violence at home.

Raised in a violent home, Leah thought she'd escaped when she moved in with her boyfriend as a teenager. Soon, Leah found herself pregnant and living with a violent partner.

Like many new mothers who experience domestic violence, Leah knew her baby girl needed a home, food to eat, and nappies. What she didn't know was how she could possibly support Charlotte on her own. It's why she kept putting up with the abuse. But when Charlotte's father started to become aggressive with their baby, Leah knew she had to leave.

Eventually, Leah met someone new and thought they could start a life together.



**“WHERE ARE WE GOING
TO SLEEP TONIGHT?”**

“When we first met it was amazing,” she remembers. It didn’t last.

Like others before him, Leah’s new partner also took advantage of her vulnerability, and she soon found herself in an even more dangerous situation.

Leah recalls, “The violence started slowly, but it got worse and worse. There was one time he locked me in his shed and wouldn’t let me out. I was hurt badly. I worried that I wouldn’t survive.” To protect herself and her baby, Leah summoned the courage to leave, but she and Charlotte had nowhere to go.

For the next two years, Leah and Charlotte would live in their car, never sleeping in the same street

twice to avoid being discovered. Leah was afraid that her ex-partner would find them, or that she would have her little girl removed from her care.

“We’d spend our days in the park, to pass the time. When I could afford food, I’d get us cheap hamburgers. It’s pretty much all we ate. It was awful.”

Leah tried everything to keep her daughter safe. When she could afford it, they’d sleep in a motel, but without the support of her family, it was hard.

Despite her own fear, Leah did what she could to comfort young Charlotte. “Each night I’d cuddle Charlotte until she fell asleep on the back seat. It was a really small car, so there wasn’t a lot of room.”

Leah worried about the impact it was having on Charlotte, but she didn’t have a choice. “The only time we’d shower is when I could scrape enough money to stay in a motel. That wasn’t often.”

Leah did not know that compassionate help was available.

She worried that if she reached out to the authorities, somebody would take her daughter away because she did not have a stable home.

One day after meeting with her ex-partner, Leah ended up in hospital. It was here that Leah was connected with a social worker and Vinnies, and that’s when her life started to turn around.

Through the encouraging support of Vinnies volunteers Frank and Narelle, Leah was offered a range of support services including access to emergency accommodation.

When more permanent housing was found, the Vinnies volunteers helped her with the application and ensured the major expenses, including white goods and furniture were taken care of.

Leah was also given food hampers and vouchers to help out when she was looking for a job. Leah even had the chance to learn some important life skills like cooking and budgeting, helping to set her up for a better future she can sustain.

Leah found her desire to study, and Vinnies volunteers were right there giving her the encouragement to apply to a university bridging program and support with her application.



*I was so scared that
Charlotte would be
taken away.*

Our volunteers and team members are on the frontlines every day, working with families in need of emergency assistance and support. It is only through support of generous people that we can help families escape violence and give them a chance to start again:

- Intervening early to prevent homelessness.
- Providing accommodation as quickly as possible.
- Supporting people to maintain stable housing.

**YOU CAN SUPPORT
VINNIES WINTER
APPEAL 2022 BY
ENCOURAGING
A DONATION TO
CONTINUE THE
GOOD WORKS THAT
ST VINCENT DE PAUL
SOCIETY (WA) DOES.**



SCHOOL SLEEPOUTS

Running a school sleepout is an interactive and meaningful way to give an experience of the feelings and impacts associated with homelessness in a safe familiar environment as well as raise important funds to help assist the most vulnerable. Schools can run sleepouts in a variety of ways. You choose which grades participate, whether the sleepout will be at the school or 'at home' with parents involved. Vinnies staff can offer support with activities, reflections and resources for the night, or you can create your own. Some schools have their student Conference or social justice group run the event. This creates ownership for the students on what they'd like to achieve, and generates some amazing new ideas as well.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Financial donations allow us the flexibility to direct funds where they are most needed and can give those we assist a sense of dignity and joy. Being able to choose your own items is a luxury that many of us may take for granted.

We encourage teachers and students to use any method of fundraising that is the easiest and most effective for your respective school (Milo mornings, bake sales, etc.).

To get involved:

Host or Join a School Sleepout*:
fundraise.vinnieswa.org.au

Download Winter Appeal Kit and activities:

www.vinnieswa.org.au/about-vinnies-wa/our-services/youth-service/

*School Sleepout participant pages are set to private to protect children's online presence.

MATERIAL DONATIONS

During Winter especially, material donations such as food, warm clothing and blankets are distributed by our Homelessness Services and Conferences to vulnerable people struggling to keep warm. Clothing donations can be sold in our stores and profits go directly back into helping your local community. At Vinnies shops, you can get a warm coat for a great price and feel good knowing that your purchase has a purpose.

Below is a list of items that we suggest schools' package to help provide emergency relief to people like Leah and Charlotte who are experiencing homelessness.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

Deodorant
Facial/hand wipes
Travel pack tissues
Combs or hairbrushes
Toothbrush + toothpaste
Blankets/sleeping bags
Water bottle, flexible soft flask type
Shampoo + conditioner sachets

FOOD ITEMS (if a viable option)

Vouchers coffee + takeaway food outlets
Tuna and Crackers
Breakfast biscuits
Up and Go
Muesli bars
Coffee bags
Tea bags
2 min noodles or mi goreng
Jelly beans or barley sugars
Fruit cups
Instant cup soup

A few things to keep in mind:

- Please place food donations into reusable sturdy shopping bags (e.g. canvas), as these are manageable for our members and volunteers, are good for the environment and also useful to our recipients.
- To uphold the dignity of those receiving the goods, please ensure that all food items are not due to expire for at least the next 6 months. All items must be non-perishable and not damaged in anyway.
- Similarly, please ensure blankets and warm clothes are in good clean condition by asking "Would I give this to a friend?" before donating.
- Look out for packaged food with a Health Star Rating of 3.5 or above. The more stars, the better! Consider variety and nice comfort items you'd be happy to receive.

NOTES

Here are some speaking notes you can adapt for your audience, to encourage giving to your Winter Appeal campaign.

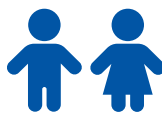
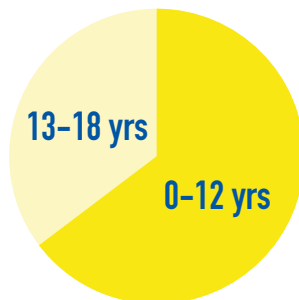
Each of us has the power to make a positive difference to the world we live in and the lives of others. In your neighbourhood and community there are many reasons to help. By partnering with the St Vincent de Paul Society for this year's Winter Appeal, you will enable Vinnies to continue providing vital services to those we assist and supporting people just like us to have a brighter future.

Did you know that more than 25,000 children are without a home in Australia today? It's expected that this number has grown since the beginning of the pandemic more than two years ago. Two-thirds of these children are under 12 years of age.

Your support of the Vinnies Winter Appeal means we (or Vinnies) can help find children a safe and permanent home and experience a bit of joy, dignity, and hope.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, "Census of Population and Housing: Estimating Homelessness, 2016"



Around two thirds of those children are under the age of 12.

Nearly
1 in 4

Homeless children aged 14 and under, are in supported accommodation for the homeless

Likelihood of children requiring homelessness assistance

8x more

Indigenous

5x more

Living in remote areas

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (FDV)

FDV is an ongoing pattern of behaviours intended to coerce, control or create fear within a family or intimate relationship. This includes physical, financial, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual violence or any other behaviour which causes the victim to live in fear.

1 in 6 women and 1 in 16 men have experienced violence by a current or previous partner (ABS 2017).

FDV can have far-reaching consequences. It is a leading cause of homelessness for women with children. In 2016-17, about 72,000 women, 34,000 children and 9,000 men seeking homelessness services reported that family and domestic violence caused or contributed to their homelessness (AIHW 2017).

A recent survey of more than 10,000 women aged 18 and over found that around 1 in 10 (9.6%) women had experienced physical violence from their partner since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic (AIHW 2021. Family, domestic and sexual violence service responses in the time of COVID-19)

Every gift provides the chance to start again. With your support Vinnies can provide:

- **Emergency Accommodation** – such as a motel for a night when crisis accommodation is not available.
- **Clothing, toiletries, blankets, and toys** – because too many victims are forced to escape with only the clothing on their back.
- **Emotional Support** – a listening ear during the more vulnerable moments.
- **Food and Financial help with bills** – to provide a starting point when you're a single parent trying to make ends meet in your new, safe home.
- **Furniture and whitegoods** – because furnishing a home is an enormous expense.

TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS

Primary homelessness: People without conventional shelter, such as people living on the streets or sleeping in cars.

Secondary homelessness: People who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another.

Tertiary homelessness: Refers to people living in boarding houses for 13 weeks or longer. They are considered to be homeless because their accommodation is seen to be below “minimum community standards”.



YOU CAN HELP FAMILIES IN NEED

FIND A SAFE PLACE TO SLEEP

EMERGENCY HELPLINES

If you are in immediate danger call the Police on 000

NON EMERGENCY 24/7 HELPLINES

1800RESPECT National Sexual Assault, Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service: a national telephone and online counselling and referral service. Phone: 1800 737 732

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800
Phone counselling. Any time. Any Reason.

Contact us:

STATE YOUTH TEAM

P: 08 6323 7526

E: youth@svdpwa.org.au

W: vinnieswa.org.au

Share your Vinnies experience to social media and be sure to follow us



facebook.com/VinniesWA



[@vinnieswa](https://www.instagram.com/vinnieswa)

If your school has a working relationship with a local Vinnies Conference, please feel free to make contact with them to organise your Winter Appeal tasks.

If you would like to be put in contact with a local Conference, please contact youth@svdpwa.org.au



St Vincent de Paul Society
(WA) INC

good works