

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Vinnies launches 2021 Winter Appeal to support homelessness

4 May 2021

As Vinnies responds to a growing demand for services following the end of JobKeeper and cuts to Job Seeker, the National Council of St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia is calling for donations to help support the rising number of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, including children.

Launching the Vinnies Winter Appeal today, National President Claire Victory said that historically low wages and cuts to income support, coupled with rising house prices and the decline in affordable rental accommodation, are pushing more families into homelessness.

'This has been exacerbated by the economic impact from the COVID-19 pandemic,' Ms Victory said.

'The government's coronavirus supplement helped keep many struggling families afloat over the past year. When that safety net disappeared at the end of March, it left the most vulnerable members of our community with nowhere to turn. In the second year of the pandemic, families are fighting to stay in their own homes, and right around the country it is children who are bearing the greatest burden.

'As temperatures drop, more people are living in cars, couch surfing or sleeping in situations that put them at risk.

'The first cut to JobSeeker from \$550 to \$250 in September 2020 pushed 370,000 people back into poverty, including 80,000 children. The second cut from \$250 to \$150 in January 2021 pushed a further 190,000 people into poverty, including 50,000 children.

'It has also placed 124,000 more families at increased risk of homelessness, with low wage earners, casual workers and single parents experiencing greater rates of job insecurity and lost income than other groups. That means more than 25,000 children under the age of 18 face homelessness each night.

'As children move from one temporary accommodation to another, routines are lost, friendships are broken and education suffers. The critical years of childhood become filled with trauma, with long-term impacts for the future.

'The Society is providing vital services and support for individuals and families facing financial hardship.

'Our members and volunteers are on the frontlines every day, working with families, intervening early to help people find accommodation as quickly as possible and supporting people to maintain stable housing.

'With generous support from the public, we can help maintain the dignity of those on the edge and restore hope to people who have fallen on hard times,' Ms Victory said.

**Donate to the 2021 Vinnies Winter Appeal via [www.vinnies.org.au/winterappeal](http://www.vinnies.org.au/winterappeal) or by calling 13 18 12.**

*The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia consists of 60,000 members and volunteers who operate on the ground through over 1,000 groups located in local communities across the country.*

---

**CONTACT: SVDP National Media: 0475 068 209/[media@svdp.org.au](mailto:media@svdp.org.au)  
[vinnies.org.au](http://vinnies.org.au) / [National media releases](#) / [Twitter](#)**