

VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT: VICTORIA

These facts have been sourced from Vinnies Victoria and a select group of reputable industry and government bodies. More information is available upon request by emailing media@sudp-vic.org.au

FUNDRAISING GOAL

Participants in the 2019 Vinnies CEO Sleepout in Victoria will be helping to raise \$1.1 million (\$900,000 in Melbourne and \$200,000 in Geelong) to support Vinnies' local, volunteer-run community services which alleviate poverty and try to prevent homelessness. In other states and territories, the event will support general homelessness support services.

This year, all money raised from the event will assist the St Vincent de Paul Society's 'conference work'. A conference is a local group of volunteers, which has an active presence in most suburbs and country towns throughout Australia. Conferences support local people in need in their homes or in dedicated community assistance centres.

Through our 'home visitation' program, volunteers provide compassionate face-to-face support with a wide variety of personal and financial needs that emerge due to ingrained poverty or other pressures such as mental illness, insecure citizenship status, relationship breakdowns or family violence. Vinnies volunteers aim to take the pressure off by providing access to the basics like food, petrol, education, utility bills, medical needs and more. This support model is designed to give people a compassionate hand up, with human connection, in times of crisis.

VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT

- The Vinnies CEO Sleepout was initiated in 2006 by a St Vincent de Paul Society volunteer in Sydney and has now grown into a successful national event, hosted annually during winter across a number of capital cities and regional centres.
- It collectively raises around \$6.5 million every year, which is used to support Vinnies services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty, including crisis accommodation, food vouchers, rent assistance, referral services and more.
- The event gives business, community and political leaders an opportunity to be part of an advocacy and fundraising campaign, which culminates in sleeping outside their comfort zone for one night at the event and hearing real stories from people who have experienced poverty and homelessness.
- This year the Victorian Vinnies CEO Sleepout is celebrating its 10-year anniversary, and the theme for the event in Victoria is *Leading with compassion*, which builds upon the idea that the Vinnies Sleepout is more than just a fundraiser; it's a meeting of minds where CEOs are well positioned to help address some of the issues that our clients face. It is no coincidence that the theme also reflects what our Victorian members and volunteers have been doing quietly for the past 165 years.

Vinnies CEO Sleepout: what we achieved in 2018

- **Campaign tagline:** *Poverty: home truths*
- **Fundraised:** \$1,025,009 (across Melbourne and Geelong)
- **Number of participants:** 330 (230 in Melbourne, 100 in Geelong)
- **Use of funds:** The funds raised will be used for ongoing home visitation and/or special projects across the state of Victoria (Melbourne Vinnies CEO Sleepout) and in the greater Geelong region (Geelong Vinnies CEO Sleepout).

Vinnies CEO Sleepout: our goals for 2019

- **Campaign tagline:** *Leading with compassion*
- **Fundraising target:** \$1.1 million (\$900,000 in Melbourne and \$200,000 Geelong)
- **Number of participants:** TBC
- **Fundraising goal:** The funds raised will assist the ongoing conference work and/or special projects, in particular those with a focus on empowering vulnerable people to take control of their circumstances across the state of Victoria (Melbourne Vinnies as above) and in the greater Geelong region (Geelong Vinnies as above).

HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY

Poverty

- **The definition:** Poverty is the state of being without the means, resources, essential goods and services that are generally accepted as the standard of living enjoyed by the broader community. The causes of poverty are reinforced by inequality in the way people have access to work and income, education, housing, health and broader services.
- **Describing poverty:** Poverty can be measured in different ways, including as a measure of income or wealth, using 'poverty lines'; or by looking at what essential items people are missing out on through lack of income, or by having to spend more of their income on certain costs. For example, spending on housing or medical bills, instead of food. This is known as 'deprivation'. ([source](#))
- **The social impact:** Poverty, inequality and disadvantage impose a heavy social and economic cost. When people cannot fulfil their potential, social cohesion is fragmented, their valuable skills go underutilised, and they struggle to live a fulfilling life.
- **Poverty and work:** The majority of people experiencing poverty receive welfare payments as their main source of income. A third of people living in poverty also rely on wages as their main source of income and the evidence is clear that a job does not safeguard people against poverty. Welfare settings, labour market policies and jobs growth policies are all important considerations for addressing poverty.

Poverty Facts

- 774,000 Victorians live in poverty (13.2%)
- Regional Victoria has a higher poverty rate than Melbourne (15.1% versus 12.6%)
- More than 1 in 6 Victorian children live in poverty (18.7% or 198,600 children)
- Women comprise the majority of adults living in poverty (54.1% or 311,800 women) ([source](#))



According to the 2015-2016 Household Expenditure Survey from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS):

- The average Australian family spent \$1,425 a week on housing, food and education costs.
- 11 percent more spend on power and energy in the past six years.
- 30 percent of Australian households were over-burdened with debt, mortgages being the primary cause.
- 24 percent increase for education costs – the largest proportional increase of any spending category.

The role of Vinnies volunteers

- Vinnies volunteers: Vinnies volunteers (conference members) support people when they are experiencing social and/or financial hardship, and help to alleviate the impacts of social isolation and poverty. Our 12,000 volunteers (more than 500 in the greater Geelong district) across the state spend time with people on the frontline, face to face, to rebuild lives.
- Vinnies support: Last financial year, Vinnies conferences assisted more than 313,000 adults and children and provided \$15.3 million of welfare assistance to families in need. Vinnies Shops provided material aid (the basics) to people in need valued at over \$1.6 million and our Vinnies Soup Vans provided more than 208,000 meals across its eight locations in regional and metropolitan Victoria.
- Rising demand on charity: Vinnies relies on less than one percent government funding to answer calls for help, so major annual events like the Vinnies CEO Sleepout are an important part of the organisation's efforts to encourage coordinated advocacy and raise vital funds to sustain its services – which are under increasing pressure. Over the past five years, Vinnies Victoria has recorded an overall rise in demand for financial welfare support by 41 percent. This includes a rise in demand for utilities support by 69 percent; a rise in food support by 32 percent; and a rise in accommodation support by 32 percent.
- Responding to deprivation: Vinnies services a number of people experiencing 'deprivation', which mean they are forced to choose between basic essentials to live; i.e. food or utility bills. This is an important and critical distinction, from absolute poverty or homelessness.

Homelessness and housing stress in Victoria

According to the latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures:

- In Australia, people living in 'severely' crowded dwellings comprise the largest homeless group, which was up 23 percent from 2011.
- The number of people living in crowded dwelling had arrived in Australia in 2011, or earlier, rose by 61 percent.

Data from the Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW) assessing specialist homelessness services 2016–17 in Victoria shows:

- One in 56 people in Victoria (Vic.) received homelessness assistance, higher than the national rate (1 in 84).
- The top 3 reasons for people seeking assistance were: domestic and family violence (44 percent, compared with 37 percent nationally); housing crisis (40 percent, compared with 44 percent); financial difficulties (39 percent, compared with 38 percent).

According to the Melbourne Rent Index (MRI), The September quarter 2018 rental report indicates that over the previous quarter the median rent was \$410 in metropolitan Melbourne and remained steady on \$300 in regional Victoria.

Leading with compassion



FACT SHEET

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According to DHHS rental report June quarter 2018:

- Over the 12 months to the June quarter, the median rent in metropolitan Melbourne increased in all regions, ranging from 1.9 percent in inner Melbourne to 5.6 per cent in Mornington Peninsula. In regional Victoria, the median rent also increased in all regions, with Barwon-South West experiencing the highest increase of 7.8 percent.

According to the Rental Affordability Index (RAI), a price index for housing rental markets:

- Every suburb in Melbourne, Geelong, or Bendigo is rated as “extremely unaffordable” for people on Newstart, meaning they would have to pay at least 60 percent of their income on rent and, in some areas, over 100 percent.
- Fringe area commuter cities and towns such as Geelong, Ballan, Kyneton and Kilmore remain moderately unaffordable to unaffordable.



St Vincent de Paul Society
VICTORIA

good works