

A warm welcome to the inaugural edition of the VInsider, your exclusive pass into the heart of Vinnies WA!



A warm welcome to the inaugural edition of The VInsider, your exclusive pass into the heart of Vinnies WA! We're thrilled you're here.

This newsletter is crafted with you in mind, offering insights, resources, and exciting activities designed to seamlessly integrate Vinnies WA into the amazing work of your school and students. Prior to the start of each new term in 2024, The VInsider will grace your inbox, bringing a helpful blend of activities, resources, news, and areas for engagement with Vinnies.

Whether your school is an experienced Vinnies supporter or stepping into this adventure for the first time, this newsletter is your guide for an incredible year ahead. Our goal is to make your connection with Vinnies as enjoyable, accessible, and impactful as possible.

Worry not about an overflowing inbox! We've carefully spaced out The VInsider to respect your time, with only four newsletters scheduled per year. But remember, our Youth Engagement Team is more than just words on a screen – we're a call or email away, ready to assist, support, and collaborate.

If you find that The VInsider isn't the right fit for you or if you'd like to include additional team members in our conversations, feel free to sign up or unsubscribe at any time.

Thank you for being a vital part of The VInsider community. Together, let's make each term an exciting chapter in the story of compassion, community, and positive change.

-Hannah Taylor, Youth Engagement Coordinator

Meet the Team!

As we dive into the new school year, we're thrilled to introduce the friendly faces of the St Vincent de Paul Society who will be your go-to people for all things Vinnies!



Hannah Taylor, Youth Engagement Coordinator, is here to ensure that your journey with Vinnies is smooth, enjoyable, and impactful. With a passion for community engagement and a commitment to making a positive difference, Hannah is your connection to the heart of our shared mission!

Contact Hannah with questions, ideas, or areas of support- she is always keen to connect and just an email or call away.



Meet **Maija Hildebrand**, our dedicated Manager of Community Engagement Services. Maija is committed to ensuring that your experience with Vinnies is seamless and meaningful. Maija plays a crucial role as a supportive figure and occasional school speaker! With a wealth of experience at Vinnies and in community engagement, she provides valuable insights and serve as a reliable support for the Youth Engagement Team.

Christmas Appeal Thank You

Our schools community came together to make a significant impact through the 2023 Christmas Appeal!



Over 2,200 Christmas hampers worth of food donated and shared by Conferences



Over \$42,000 raised to benefit local community members in need



Over 700 toys collected to make Christmas brighter for West Australian families

From all of us at Vinnies WA, an enormous thank you for your support and donations to our 2023 Christmas Appeal. Because of your involvement, we were able to support community members to celebrate a happy and healthy Christmas.

Our schools community donated over 2,200 Christmas Hampers, 700 Christmas gifts, and \$42,000.

Term One Activities

Help your primary school students connect to the work of Vinnies WA and the importance of their support through hands-on activities!

This Term, consider the meaning behind Social Justice, create a Mini Vinnies logo, think about the communities you are part of and issues they may face, and learn about community organisations that are making a difference in Western Australia.

- [Social Justice Factsheet](#)
- [Mini Vinnies Logo activity](#)
- [Our Community activity](#)
- [Services that Support our Community activity](#)

Support Vinnies in Term One

Want to start the year with a hands-on donation activity that supports people transitioning out of homelessness? Consider creating a “Welcome to Home” pack as a class!

These packs will be given to young people and adults in WA who are transitioning into their first home after experiencing homelessness- often with little to nothing to call “theirs”.

Each pack can be unique, but will ideally include (new):

- Cutlery kit for one
- One plate, bowl, and mug
- A tea towel
- Bath towels
- A face washer
- A hand towel
- A bath mat
- Broom and dustpan
- Some small, homely items to make their new space feel like home (such as a plastic plant, picture frame, or reed diffusers)

Alternatively, as we enter a new year, Conferences are asking for donations of food to refresh their pantry, blankets to prepare for the winter, and funds to offer support to families.

If you would like more ideas of how to support Vinnies or to learn about the specific needs of your Conference, please reach out to

Youth@svdpwa.org.au.



2024 Planning

Get ready for a full and exciting year of making a positive impact with St. Vincent de Paul Society of WA!

As we look ahead to the school terms, we've crafted a plan for your engagement, ensuring each term is brimming with opportunities to contribute to our shared mission. Each school is unique, so always feel free to adjust and add as needed!

Term 1

- Establish a Mini Vinnies group within your school or year group to give students the chance to engage with Vinnies throughout the year. Don't forget to order your Mini Vinnies badges!
- Schedule a Vinnies speaker for 2024 to enhance students' understanding and connection to Vinnies.
- Create a "Welcome to Home" pack for those transitioning out of homelessness.
- Consider participating in the Autumn Appeal to replenish much needed supplies for your local Conference.

Term 2

- Continue your work with Mini Vinnies, meeting regularly and offering ongoing learning and

engagement opportunities.

- Participate in the 2024 Winter Appeal, collecting non-perishable food and funds to support vulnerable community members through the cold winter months.

Term 3

- Build empathy by participating in the School Sleepout. This event provides a unique opportunity for students to better understand the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness.
- Maintain the momentum of your Mini Vinnies group initiatives- consider running an educational poster campaign for the wider school!

Term 4

- Wrap up the year on a heart-warming note by engaging in the Christmas Appeal.
- Encourage students to write Christmas cards, spreading joy to those who may need it most.
- Ask students to volunteer their time after school to sort food donated for Christmas hampers, ensuring it is all in date and bringing the spirit of giving to life.

If you have any questions, need guidance, or want to explore more ways to get involved, don't hesitate to reach out to Youth@svdpwa.org.au. Together, let's make this school year one filled with compassion, connection, and positive change!

School Spotlight

Would you like to share your school's successes through the School Spotlight? Reach out to Youth@svdpwa.org.au to register your interest!



Conference Connection



There are 75 St Vincent de Paul Society Conferences in Western Australia. These Conferences are made up of volunteers, or Members, who live or work in a specific area. Each Conference works to support their communities through Emergency Relief and other programs that meet the needs of their neighbours. Each Term we will feature a local Conference to share a little about who they are and what they do in their communities!

Meet the Ocean Reef Conference!

The Ocean Reef was formed 33 years ago and offers support to community members in Ocean

Reef, Heathridge, Connolly, Currambine, Kinross, Burns Beach, and Iluka. Their eight members enjoy being able to care for their community through their food pantry, volunteering at the Joondalup Support Centre, home visits, Emergency Relief, and senior social supports.

Conference President Rosemary shares that they are especially passionate about the genuine care they are able to share with the people they support in addition to the essential Emergency Relief support.

The Ocean Reef Conference is especially grateful to Simon Peter Catholic Primary School, Prendiville Catholic College, and Francis Jordan Catholic School for their ongoing support!
Schools like yours support Conferences to do their work through your financial donations, food drives, and item collections. If you would like to learn more about your local Conference, reach out to Youth@svdpwa.org.au.

Join Mini Vinnies

The Mini Vinnies program supports schools to offer education around social justice issues, empathy building activities, and leadership opportunities. This program is designed to flex to your school's individual needs, and we are happy to answer any questions you may have, and you can review our Mini Vinnies Starter Kit [HERE!](#)

If your school is ready to sign up to participate in Mini Vinnies, or if you would like to learn more about the program, now is a great time to register your interest for 2024! Simply fill out [THIS SURVEY](#) and we will reach out with next steps.

Mini Vinnies Badges

We're thrilled to offer a streamlined process for requesting your Mini Vinnies badges. Follow these simple steps:

1. Complete [THIS](#) brief survey with your details.
2. Share a brief overview of your involvement with Mini Vinnies.
3. Sit back and look forward to receiving your Mini Vinnies badge that proudly reflects your students' commitment.

We can't wait to see your badges proudly displayed throughout the year!

Request a Speaker

Are you interested in having a Vinnies representative speak with your students?

Presentations for up to 40 students at a time can be an amazing way for your students to better understand the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the work we do to support people experiencing homelessness and poverty in WA.

We would love to connect with your students and show them the incredible impact they can have as young people.

Simply email Youth@svdpwa.org.au to inquire about a speaking event.

youth@svdpwa.org.au | [Visit our website](#)



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this land, with deep respect. May Elders, past and present, be blessed and honoured. May we join together and build a future based on compassion, justice, hope, faith, and reconciliation.