

SPRING 2023

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY VICTORIA

Feature

YOU ARE HELPING
TO FILL RUMBLING
TUMMIES

STORIES OF HOW YOUR
SUPPORT IMPACTS LIVES

—DONOR—
IMPACT
REPORT

THANK YOU FROM OUR CEO

Hello everyone,

As we mark the change of season, we are reminded of the growing urgency of an issue affecting thousands of Victorians: food insecurity. As the newly appointed CEO of St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria, I am honoured to join this incredible mission and work alongside you to make a tangible difference in the lives of those affected.



According to the latest World Economic Forum statistics, an alarming 122 million more individuals are experiencing hunger now compared to pre-pandemic times. Among them are our fellow Victorians, both adults and children.

In light of this pressing challenge we thank you – our supporters.

For nearly 170 years, St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria has been a beacon of support for people in need. Driven by a mission to alleviate food insecurity in Victoria, we stand – along with you – ready to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected.

Almost 90% of our metropolitan welfare assistance requests were related to food in the past fiscal year. Our dedicated volunteers witness the growing lines at our Vinnies Soup Vans and mobile pantries, filled with individuals, families, and children eagerly waiting for sustenance.

No mother like Miriam*, who you can read about in this issue, should be faced with the heart-wrenching choice between feeding her children or affording necessary medications.

The statistics paint a clear picture: during the past financial year, our volunteers provided over 776,000 meals – a nearly 30% increase from the previous year. Our commitment extends beyond the city centre to encompass suburbs and regions, exemplified by the initiation of the Berwick Vinnies Mobile Pantry to address escalating demand.

Yet, our work is far from complete. With each dollar you provide, you are helping transform empty plates into nourishing meals, ensuring no Victorian goes hungry. Access to food is a fundamental human right, and with your ongoing support, together, we can make a meaningful impact.

I thank you as we create a community where no one goes without a meal, no child's lunchbox remains empty, and no tummy grumbles from hunger.

Together, we can turn compassion into action and reduce food insecurity in Victoria.

Warm wishes,

Jennifer Fitzgerald

Dr Jennifer Fitzgerald AM
Group Chief Executive Officer
St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria

* First names used only to protect privacy.



Donate now to help nourish children and families ensuring they receive essential meals to grow healthy and strong.
Donate online now

YOUR GIFT MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

IN THE LAST FINANCIAL YEAR:



33% INCREASE IN FUNDS SPENT ON FOOD ASSISTANCE



YOU SUPPORTED A 29% INCREASE IN SOUP VAN AND MOBILE PANTRY MEALS PROVIDED



YOUR DONATION ENABLED A 30% INCREASE IN MEALS PROVIDED BY THE VINNIES INNER-CITY SOUP VAN



235% INCREASE IN PEOPLE WAITING IN LINE IN BERWICK FOR FOOD



YOU HELP US DISTRIBUTE 22 TONNES OF FOOD PER MONTH THROUGH OUR VINNIES SOUP VANS



88% OF ALL CALLERS ASKING FOR FOOD

NEXT: PREPARING FOR AN EVEN BUSIER SPRING THIS YEAR THIS YEAR, BASED ON OUR FORECAST, AND WITH YOUR DONATIONS, OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE PREPARING FOR A HIGHER DEMAND FOR FOOD THAN LAST YEAR.



FAMILIES ARE BEING FED AND, IT'S THANKS TO YOU!

Miriam* never thought she would face a struggle to feed her family.

Miriam's story serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of generous supporters like you in providing support and assistance to families and individuals in need.

Fleeing her homeland with her husband, Miriam arrived in Australia seeking safety and a brighter future. As a mother of two young children, Miriam is struggling to make ends meet.

Miriam developed gestational diabetes during pregnancy and requires prescribed medication to balance her insulin and blood pressure. Each day, Miriam faces a delicate balancing act between her own health and providing nutritious food for her children.

Imagine, as a parent, being forced to choose between life-saving medication and putting fresh food on your children's plates.

Miriam tells us, "It breaks my heart when my children come home and ask me, 'Mummy, can I have an apple tomorrow?' Sometimes they ask, 'Mummy, why don't I have enough food in my lunch box?'"

Miriam was introduced to the Berwick Vinnies Mobile Pantry by a local shopper who noticed that Miriam had to put food back on the shelf at her local supermarket as she did not have enough money to buy essential food items.

Through the generosity of donors like you, Vinnies has been able to ensure that people like Miriam

and her family receive the food they need and can break the cycle of hunger.

The Vinnies mobile pantry offers a lifeline to nutritious staples like rice and oil, and protein-rich canned items to sustain Miriam's family for several days.

The savings she makes here allows Miriam to buy fresh produce for her family which not only helps with their health needs but adds happiness to her children's lives.

"Without the mobile pantry, our days were hard, I was always worried about when I could buy food. Now our days are bright, and the Vinnies volunteers always ask about my children."

Thanks to generous contributions from supporters like you, our Vinnies Soup Vans provide a vital service reaching people who need it the most, without judgment, without hesitation.

The number of families waiting in line has risen by over 235%, and in January 2023 alone, we served more than 5,000 meals to those in need — the highest since its commencement.

Your support ensures that every child receives the nutrition they need for their development, every pregnant mother and individual with chronic illnesses can afford essential medication, and every person feels the warmth of a caring community that stands by them during their hardest times.



DONATE TO VINNIES SPRING APPEAL



Every act of kindness counts. Support Vinnies soup vans and assist us to provide more meals, donate today.
Donate online now

* Names and images have been changed to protect privacy.



WITH YOUR HELP JAMAL IS THRIVING AT LEARNING

“Jamal’s communication has really improved. I see him giggling and talking loudly”, says Jamal’s mother, Salma*.

Earlier this year, we introduced you to Jamal who attends the St Vincent de Paul Society’s education program. We happily report that Jamal still attends each week, and with your generous donation, his confidence in reading and writing in English has continued to grow. Jamal’s love for music also continues. In fact, Music is his favourite subject in school; as is now English. Jamal tells us he enjoys English so much that he looks forward to his English lessons every day and is keen to read more books!

Since April 2023, 3,844 hours of student support were delivered through our eight education programs in Victoria. It is only because of your ongoing support that our largest program in Dandenong which Jamal attends, has flourished during the past months. 180 students have enrolled and the program has proven so successful that we now have a waitlist as we train more volunteers. The volunteer training will ensure that we can continue offering valuable quality support to students so they can have a bright future with wonderful opportunities.

Our heartfelt thanks to all our generous donors. You are making a difference to young people like Jamal so he can thrive at school.

* Names and images have been changed to protect privacy.

THANK YOU FOR GIVING IMMEDIATE AND LONG- TERM SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS LIKE JOAN

This Winter we met Joan* whose journey of overcoming from homelessness at 70 resonated deeply, and your response has been truly overwhelming.

During our Winter Appeal, you showered Joan with messages of hope and support. Your support has moved us and strengthened our determination to combat homelessness.

Your messages have not only touched our hearts, but also reaffirmed our commitment to making a lasting impact on the issue of homelessness. We are truly grateful for your unwavering support.

It is only through your generosity that individuals like Joan, who are experiencing homelessness, are provided with the opportunity to rebuild their lives.



Your gift has a significant impact. Donate today to enable our members and volunteers who work tirelessly to support vulnerable Victorians. [Donate online now](#)



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VISIT vinnies.org.au OR
PHONE 13 18 12



St Vincent de Paul Society
VICTORIA
good works