

# VINNIES COVID-19 WINTER APPEAL 2020

# SCHOOL RESOURCES



**Overnight, the COVID-19 pandemic has redefined the economic, health and social landscape of Australia. Once social distancing restrictions are eased and government funding subsidies, we face a future where many in our community will experience poverty and hardship, some for the first time ever.**

Experts predict as many as 3.4 million Australians will be out of work as a result of government shutdowns and social distancing restrictions.

Many have become vulnerable overnight, but we cannot forget that millions were already vulnerable before this pandemic. 3.24 million Australians<sup>[1]</sup> lived below the poverty line before the COVID-19 crisis.

Those people already vulnerable, combined with the newly unemployed as a result of the COVID-19 crisis means more people than ever are at risk or experiencing poverty.

Each year, Vinnies provides shelter, food, clothing, financial support, friendship and care for tens of thousands of people in NSW. Since the coronavirus outbreak, our volunteers and staff have worked tirelessly and creatively to keep our doors open at a time of increasing need.

Now, more than ever, is the time for us to come together to support those experiencing hardship. We invite schools to join with us in fundraising for the Vinnies COVID-19 Winter Appeal, supporting us to continue making a difference for people whose lives have been turned upside down.

Students, teachers and parents can contribute in several ways: by raising money, donating material goods, or by performing simple acts of kindness.

Our adaptable learning resources will help you to inspire your students to support themselves, one another and the wider community during this difficult time.

We wish you and your school community well and hope that you'll be heartened in joining us in this year's special COVID-19 Winter Appeal.

If you or someone you love is struggling right now, please call our helpline on 13 18 12. We will stand by you during this crisis.

<sup>[1]</sup> The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the University of New South Wales (UNSW)

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS PACK

- Ray and Catherine's story
- Vinnies' response to COVID-19
- How to get involved
- Learning resources

## CONTACT US

**For enquiries, and to share what your school is doing for the COVID-19 Winter Appeal, please contact: [youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au](mailto:youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au)**

We'd love to hear from you!

Please contact your local Vinnies Conference or staff contact for information about the need for material donations and delivery details for your local area. Contact details can be found on the last page.

# RAY AND CATHERINE'S STORY

**Coronavirus has upended the world as we know it. In a matter of weeks, COVID-19 has completely altered our everyday life. The crisis has virtually shut down the country, and its duration is unknown. It has caused many people to lose their jobs and left hundreds of thousands of Australians queuing for Centrelink support.**

This is what has happened to Ray and his wife Catherine. Just weeks ago, Ray was a busy personal trainer working across five different gyms. Today he is completely out of work and worried that his young family will be evicted from their home or unable to afford a supermarket shop next week.

“The difference a day makes is incredible. It was like a domino effect,” Ray’s wife Catherine said.

She had just finished studying herself, and was due to start a new job, after many years as a stay-at-home mum and carer for her sister, who lives with Down syndrome. But that too has been put on hold due to COVID-19.

Suddenly the family were in a situation they never imagined; worrying about how they would meet rent, keep their lights on, and ensure their five-year-old son Ben, doesn’t go hungry.

“It’s an emotional rollercoaster, day by day. I force myself to get out of bed every morning, just to stop thinking dark thoughts,” said Catherine. “I just need some hope.”

As they come to terms with their “new normal”, the family are living on Catherine’s meagre carer’s pension of \$360 a week. That means this family of three are forced to survive on \$50 a day, before rent, utilities and food.

“We’ve tried to put all of our outstanding bills on hold as much as possible, and that’s helped a bit. But when this six-month period ends, a huge debt will have just accrued,” explained Catherine.

Ray’s mental health is at breaking point right now. While he keeps busy applying for jobs, he is struggling with adjusting to the reality of unemployment and the uncertainty of when he will work again.

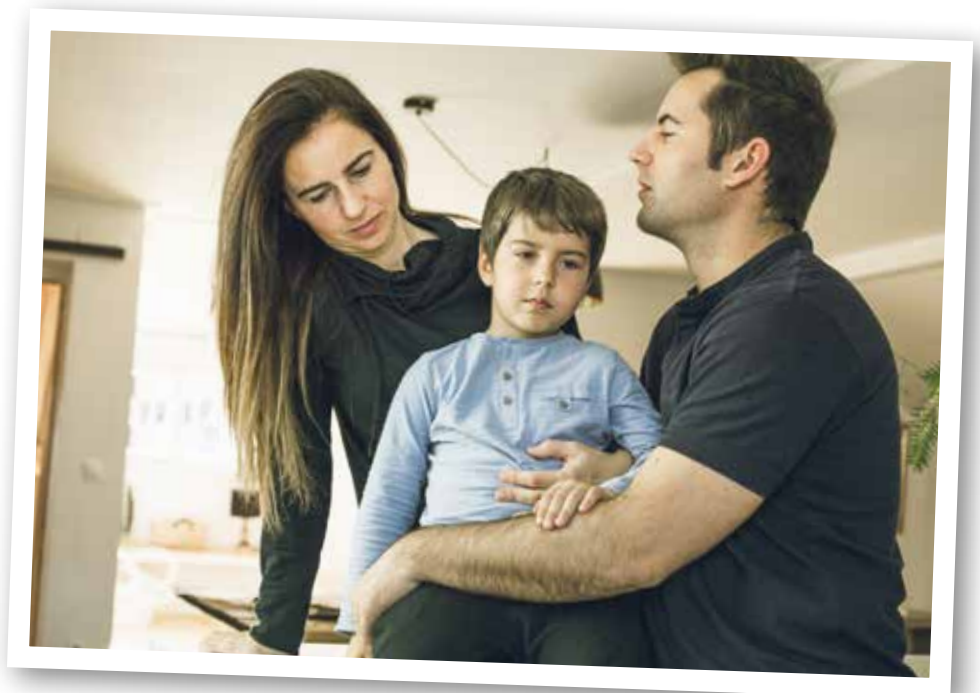
As his family’s sole breadwinner, and with limited savings, you can imagine the burden he feels, the powerlessness and the anxiety of what the future holds.

Catherine and Ray never had to ask for help from a charity or government before, and they struggled to come forward. When they finally called Kim, a local Vinnies support worker, Catherine’s one humble request was for some winter clothes for Ben.

“I came to Vinnies with so much shame about my situation, but Kim treated me with such dignity,” said Catherine.

Thanks to the kindness of Vinnies’ donors and supporters, our worker Kim was able to help pay the family’s electricity bill. She also dropped off warm clothes and much-needed food vouchers at their front door.

“I’m eternally grateful for the hope we now have, and the sense that we’re going to be okay,” Catherine told Kim.



# VINNIES' RESPONSE TO COVID-19

COVID-19 has put increased pressure on disadvantaged families in New South Wales who are struggling to pay the rent, maintain their health and buy warm clothes for their children. Then there are the newly unemployed, such as Ray, who are turning to us for assistance for the first time.

We want to assure you as our dedicated school supporters that our good works will not be stopped by COVID-19. While our services are being challenged by the pandemic, we have worked swiftly to protect the safety of the people we assist as well as our staff and volunteers, and make sure we're prepared to continue our emergency relief. The majority of our community services have remained up and running throughout the coronavirus crisis.

HOWEVER, WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT NOW MORE THAN EVER.

WITH UNEMPLOYMENT TIPPED TO AFFECT 3.6 MILLION AUSTRALIANS, WE KNOW THERE WILL BE SO MANY MORE FAMILIES LIKE RAY AND CATHERINE'S CALLING US FOR HELP.



Help us keep Aussies hit hardest by the pandemic  
**safe, fed & supported.**

**Donate to the Vinnies COVID-19 Winter Appeal today at**  
[vinnies.org.au/donate](http://vinnies.org.au/donate)  
or call 13 18 12

 **Vinnies**  
good works



# HOW TO GET INVOLVED



## FINANCIAL DONATIONS

Right now, the most effective way to show your support is through a financial donation. Your generous gift, whatever the size, will help us provide immediate assistance to those in need during this crisis. Financial gifts can be transformed into much-needed groceries, medication, warm clothes, toiletries and help with bills to keep the lights on during winter.

### There are two ways to participate financially:

- 1) Come together in solidarity as a school community and create your own personalised online school fundraising page at: <https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/>
- 2) Raise funds as a school offline, and then donate at: [www.vinnies.org.au/donate](http://www.vinnies.org.au/donate). You may also like to support the appeal by simply sharing and promoting this link to show your school community where to donate.

## MATERIAL DONATIONS

Material donations such as food, warm clothing and blankets are still needed – even more so this winter. Warm clothing and blankets help to reduce energy bills and are essential for people experiencing homelessness. Pantry items and snack bags are also greatly needed by our services that serve people who have very little.

Please get in touch with your local Vinnies Conference or staff contact to determine the needs in your area, and to arrange delivery details. Contact details can be found on the last page of this pack.



### A few things to keep in mind:

- Please place food donations into reusable shopping bags (e.g. canvas), as these are most manageable for our members and volunteers 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 6 months. All items must be non-perishable.
- Similarly, please ensure blankets and warm clothes are in good condition by asking ‘would I give this to a friend?’
- Look out for packaged food with a Health Star Rating of 3.5 or above. The more stars, the better!

## ACTS OF KINDNESS

It's not only material and financial donations that are needed. Love and kindness are also really needed to support people who are feeling isolated and worried during this crisis. Some ways your school students can support others:



- Do you know someone who might be isolated? A classmate who you haven't heard from in a while? A neighbour who lives alone? Challenge the class to make a call or send a message to someone to check in on how they're feeling.
- Write ‘thinking of you’ cards and deliver them to one of our Vinnies services or Conferences to brighten someone's day.
- Help spread smiles and laughter! Find a funny video or make your own, and share it with those in your household, your friends and your family.



**We'd love to hear about your students' acts of kindness for the COVID-19 Winter Appeal!**  
Please share what you're doing with [youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au](mailto:youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au).

# LEARNING RESOURCES

We've created a small suite of Vinnies COVID-19 Winter Appeal learning resources to help inspire your students to do what they can to support themselves, one another and the wider community during this pandemic crisis.

**All resources can be downloaded at <https://youthnsw.vinnies.org.au/resources/COVID-19-winter-appeal>**

We've done our best to make this year's resources adaptable to online learning.

Below is a list of the resources available and the suggested age groups. All activities (apart from the Powerpoint presentation) could be used as a worksheet, an individual reflection, or adapted for a class discussion.

## Introducing the appeal

Introduction Powerpoint slides All stages

*The Powerpoint is intended as an introduction to all activities below. The introduction is best conducted as a class activity.*

## Activities

Keep Well and Look After Others Colouring In	Stage 1 and 2
Helping Others in Difficult Times	Stage 2 and 3
Change and Feelings Reflection	Stage 3 and 4
We Are the Society (Video Reflection)	Stage 4, 5 and 6

*Please note: There may be some children in your class who may be experiencing poverty and the impacts of COVID-19, for whom these issues might trigger a strong emotional response.*



## CONTACT US

If you have any questions, please contact your local Vinnies team.

<b>Armidale</b>	02 5776 0200
<b>Bathurst</b>	02 6362 2565
<b>Broken Bay</b>	0429 333 055
<b>Lismore</b>	02 5612 1365
<b>Maitland/Newcastle</b>	0414 616 291
<b>Parramatta</b>	0487 001 186
<b>Sydney</b>	0477 440 567
<b>Wagga Wagga</b>	0417 245 531
<b>Wilcannia Forbes</b>	02 6862 5758
<b>Wollongong</b>	02 9820 8223

Please note that due to the impact of COVID-19, some lines may not be attended at all times. If you cannot reach someone to help with your enquiry using the numbers above, please email [youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au](mailto:youth.nsw@vinnies.org.au).

## YOUTHNSW.VINNIES.ORG.AU

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