

2024 VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL

SCHOOLS KIT



WHAT'S IN THIS PACK?

1. 2024 Vinnies Christmas Appeal Introduction
2. Case Study – Tania’s Story
3. Cost of Living Pressures 2024
4. How to Give
5. Activities (see table below)
6. References



Classroom Activity	Lower primary	Upper primary	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary	Run time (minutes)	Page number
See Think Do: Tania’s Story	✓	✓	✓	✓	30-40	3
Recycled Wreath	✓	✓	✓	✓	30-40	11
Christmas Diaries	✓	✓	✓		20-30	12
True Cost of Christmas		✓	✓	✓	50-60	15
Serving the Community			✓	✓	30-45	17

DEAR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS,

The Vinnies Youth Team is delighted to share with you the 2024 Vinnies Christmas Appeal Schools Kit to assist you and your school community in facilitating this year's Appeal.

This year, the Vinnies Christmas Appeal focuses on the **continuing impacts of the cost-of-living crisis in Australia**, with a particular emphasis on the devastating and unrelenting impacts as the crisis continues to impact individuals and families across the country.

This Christmas, more families are experiencing poverty and are on the brink of homelessness due to the relentless rising cost-of-living in Australia. The crisis has been an ongoing issue impacting Australians for over two years with no sign of reprieve. As the crisis deepens, so does the amount of people turning to Vinnies for support.

In the last year, Vinnies has seen a growing number of people relying on support from our services to get by – many of which are seeking assistance for the first time. A combination of housing unaffordability, high interest rates, modest growth of wages, and the rising cost of grocery and utility bills are pushing more households to the brink. As a result, more people are calling on the Society to provide lifelines and support in meeting basic needs.

A recent report by the McKell Institute found that over 82% of people assisted by Vinnies NSW believe that the support provided by the Society played a key role in averting issues such as eviction or severe hunger. Further, 89% of people with lived experience reported that the support provided by Vinnies NSW positively impacted their stress levels and overall wellbeing. Your urgent help can provide relief.

Here at Vinnies, our dedicated Members, volunteers and staff work tirelessly to address the challenging realities that many Australians face on a daily basis. The materials and funds raised through the Vinnies Christmas Appeal



are essential in allowing the Society to respond to the growing demand for support and to help ensure that assistance reaches those in need to relieve the additional pressures of the festive season.

The following suite of activities have been compiled by Vinnies Youth staff for use of school communities during the 2024 Vinnies Christmas Appeal. In this pack, you will learn about the ongoing and relentless impacts of the cost-of-living crisis, ways to give and activities for students to learn about inflation as a social justice issue which perpetuates disadvantage.

Your school's support of the Vinnies Christmas Appeal will not only provide much needed relief to Australians who are currently burdened by a daily struggle of survival, comfort and dignity, but will also gift joy and hope this holiday season.

Thank you very much for taking the time to promote the Vinnies Christmas Appeal and for your contributions towards the critical work of the St Vincent de Paul Society.

On behalf of all at Vinnies, we wish you a joyful holiday season!

The Vinnies Youth Team

P.s. If you or someone you know needs support, please call our helpline on 13 18 12.

CASE STUDY: TANIA'S STORY

Gaining a community of support

Tania has faced more challenges in a few years than most people face in a lifetime.

Relationship breakdowns. Mental health diagnoses. Homelessness.

Through the toughest of days, she has persevered because of a constant source of hope.

“I just look at my kids and that’s why I keep going.”

Raising a teenage son and younger twin daughters as a single mother, the continued cost of living crisis has had devastating and unrelenting impacts for families like Tania’s, who try to stretch their finances further as costs keep going up.

“At the end of a fortnight, I have \$53 and I don’t get paid until Friday.”

“I’ll work out how much money I’ve got per day for the fortnight... I can’t just go to the shops



and go, ‘we’ll get this, this and this’ without knowing a budget.”

“I have to pay for medication, it’s \$20, but that’s \$20 in fuel or something else.

“It means that we have to stay home and have two-minute noodles for the next couple of days – it is what it is, [my daughter] needs those antibiotics.”

“If I have to go without, I will go without.”

Thankfully, Vinnies has been able to ease the load for Tania with meals that fit in with her family’s dietary requirements.

First coming into contact with the St Vincent de Paul Society when she received a notice to vacate her rental property, Vinnies caseworkers were able to provide immediate support with food and clothing.

Gaining further assistance with referral services, including essential prescriptions for her twin daughters who live with chronic asthma, the ongoing support culminated in a transformative



moment where she was offered a place through community housing that she now calls her forever home.

“I surprised my kids on the Friday when I picked them up, we started moving in that night, and then had our first night on the Saturday.”

“It’s home – safety, stability.”

Tania regards the support she has received from Vinnies as a community, “it’s not just one person that deals with you, it’s everyone coming in to help.”

“Vinnies go above and beyond; they’ve gotten to know me and I’m so grateful.”

This community is far-reaching with St Vincent de Paul Society NSW members supporting close to 100,000 people over the past year.

This alarming figure – rising by 14% from the previous 12 months – has placed significant strain on the most basic of needs with four in five people requesting food assistance and close to half citing housing stress.

People in Tania’s circumstances – sole parents with dependents – made up close to a third of the people seeking assistance.

The rising cost of living remains an ever-present issue for Tania, as she works to manage competing expenses that result in having to make choices that no one should have to weigh up.

These choices are heartbreaking and reflect the demand for support at all times of year, but especially at Christmas.

Between November and January, 40% of all the people supported by St Vincent de Paul Society members in the last financial year requested some form of assistance.

With the support of Vinnies in place, Tania is looking towards the Christmas season with renewed hope.

“It’s not just a one-day event, it’s the lead up to it – I love the anticipation – I know what they’re getting, but I’m so excited to see them get it!

“Watching their faces light up while we’re making Christmas breakfast, whether it’s pancakes or bacon and eggs, and then getting to go and open up presents... they’re so excited and watching them playing with them.

“My present is seeing my kids happy and seeing their faces light up.”

The St Vincent de Paul Society has been able to make a difference in the lives of Tania and her family, but so many more still need support in their time of need.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

by making a donation to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal at: www.vinnies.org.au or calling 13 18 12.



COST OF LIVING PRESSURES 2024



This year's Christmas Appeal is focused on the continuing impact of the cost of living pressures. These suggested speaking notes can be adapted to the audience or year group of your students to encourage their participation in this year's campaign.

The cost of living is defined as how much money it takes to afford life's necessities, such as food, housing, transportation, healthcare, utilities and taxes.

What are we paying for groceries?

- Australians are spending an extra \$37 per week on groceries, an additional \$1,934 per year.
- A loaf of white bread cost \$3.40 on average in 2019. It now costs \$4.45.
- The cost of a packet of spaghetti has increased by 11% on average since 2019.
- Cheese has increased on average by 23% since 2021.
- The cost of butter has gone up by 9% since 2022.
- Cereals have increased by 20% since 2022, a breakfast cereal that cost \$4.86 in 2022, now costs \$5.73 on average.
- Kitchen staples (sauce, flour, rice etc) have gone up by 44% on average in a year in some supermarket chains.

How does this affect your food budget?

- In over a year, a serving of breakfast cereal and milk has increased by 10c. For two children, eating cereal every day, that an increase of over \$70 per year.
- Let's say a family of four like to eat ham sandwiches on white bread. In 2019, this would have cost your family \$1.57 per serve. In 2024, it now costs \$1.99 per serve. For four people, three times a week, that means an extra cost of \$262 per year.
- A pasta dinner, not factoring in sauce or topping, three times a week, is now costing you an extra \$37 on average per year than it did in 2020.

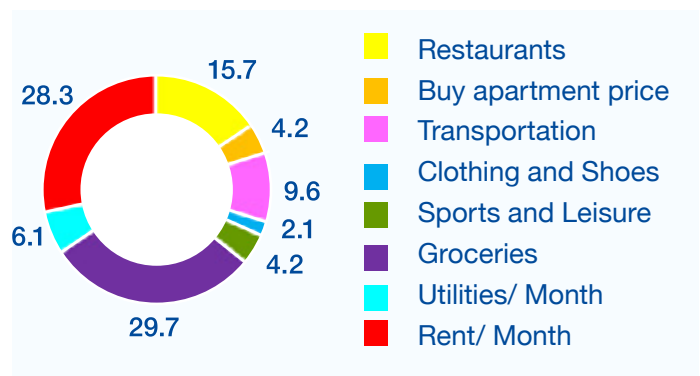
Sydney, you're paying 41% more for bread than pre-pandemic. CHOICE, February 2024. Sydney, you're paying 41% more for bread than pre-pandemic | CHOICE.

Rental affordability:

- Out of over 45,000 listed rentals, it was found that:
- 289 rentals (0.6%) were affordable for a person earning a full-time minimum wage.
- 89 rentals (0.2%) were affordable to a person on the Age Pension.
- 31 rentals (0.1%) were affordable for a person on the Disability Support Pension.
- 3 rentals (0%) all sharehouses, were affordable for a person on JobSeeker.
- 0 rentals (0%) were affordable for a person on Youth Allowance.

2024: Rental Affordability Snapshot 2024: Rental Affordability Snapshot - Anglicare Australia

Distribution of Expenses



(Source: Numbeo.com July 2024) Cost of Living in Australia. Prices in Australia. Updated Aug 2024 (numbeo.com).

If you or someone you know needs support, please call our helpline on 13 18 12.

HOW TO GIVE

TO GIVE FINANCIALLY

Financial donations allow us the flexibility to direct funds where they are most needed. It also gives those we assist the sense of dignity and joy of choosing their own items, which many of us may take for granted. You can nominate a financial gift toward your local area or a particular Vinnies service if you wish.

To donate financially, you can either;

1) Create your own personalised online school fundraising page at: <https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-your-way>

or

2) Raise funds (offline), and then donate at our website: <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/donation-hub>
If you would like your donation to go to your local Conference or Service, please be sure to include the name of the Conference or Service when donating through the online portals.

3) Via direct deposit to:

Payee Name: St Vincent de Paul Society NSW

Street Address: 2C West Street, Lewisham

Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank

Branch: Leichhardt NSW

Account Name: SVdP Appeals

BSB: 062 193

Account Number: 1005 7471

Reference: 00-156

*Cheques can be written to
"St Vincent de Paul Society NSW" and mailed to:
PO Box 5, Petersham, NSW 2049

Please send a Remittance Advice to
remittances@vinnies.org.au and copy your Schools
and Youth Engagement Officer



TO GIVE HAMPERS, FOOD, OR GIFTS

Your local Conference Members are doing good works in the community every week and are best placed to understand the needs of the people they serve.

Usually Conferences are excited to receive your hampers, although it may be preferable in *some* circumstances to give gift cards or financially instead. Check in with your local Conference to find out!

Where do the hampers go?

Hampers are delivered to families in your community who have called upon Vinnies for a hand-up.

To uphold the dignity of those receiving the hamper, please ensure that all food items are not due to expire for at least 6 months. All items must be non-perishable and undamaged. Look out for packaged food with a Health Star Rating of 3.5 or above. The more stars, the better!

Tip: One way to organise the hampers is to allocate families to different classrooms. Consider the needs of the family, and adjust the hamper accordingly.

CHRISTMAS HAMPER IDEAS

Below are some items you might consider putting into a family hamper. You might like to include a handmade Christmas Card of Hope (see activities section of this pack for instructions).

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas pudding | <input type="checkbox"/> Biscuits – sweet, savoury |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-life custard | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas lollies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tea and Coffee | <input type="checkbox"/> Jelly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milo | <input type="checkbox"/> Spreads – jam, vegemite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long life milk | <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tim Tams | <input type="checkbox"/> Pancake mix |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas lollies | <input type="checkbox"/> Tinned vegetables |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit cake | <input type="checkbox"/> Gravy mix |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tinned fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Soup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cordial | <input type="checkbox"/> Dried pasta |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Long-life juice | <input type="checkbox"/> Pasta sauce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cereal | <input type="checkbox"/> Bonbons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit mince pies | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Decorations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shortbread | <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas gifts (new) |

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Gifts for individuals and families can help make someone's Christmas extra special.

We have added some ideas below. It is good to check with your Conference what items the families they support require. We also recommend asking your Conference if you can assist with gift wrapping.

Note: if your local Conference is inactive or does not require additional donations at this time, check in with your Schools Engagement Officer about which local Vinnies Service(s) or Support Centre may require support this Christmas.

Babies and Toddlers

- Rattles
- Blankets/Comforters
- Building Blocks
- Bath Toys
- Soft Toys
- Musical toys
- Storybooks

Young Children (4-8yrs)

- Sports equipment
- Books
- Dolls
- Outdoor games
- Board games
- Toy cars or trains
- Stationery
- Colouring-in books/textas
- Dress-up costumes
- Water pistols
- Christmas stocking

SHARE YOUR EFFORTS!

Share your pictures and stories by tagging us on
Instagram: @VinniesYouthNSW
and Facebook: @NSWVinniesYouth



Older Children (9-12yrs)

- Lego
- Cards games
- Magic Trick set
- Books
- Activity books
- Puzzles
- Hair accessories
- Outdoor equipment
- Shopping/Gift cards
- Water pistols
- Christmas stocking

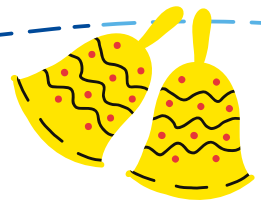
Teenagers

- Movie Vouchers
- Body lotions
- Accessories (e.g. caps, jewellery)
- Deodorant packs
- Shopping/Gift cards
- Books
- Perfume/spray packs
- Make-up (e.g. lip gloss, nail polish)
- Beach Towels
- Bags, back-packs
- Christmas stocking

Adults

- Books
- Perfume or deodorant packs
- Cosmetic gift packs
- Movie vouchers
- Homewares
- Hampers
- Vinnies Vouchers

**THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING
WITH US TO CHANGE LIVES!**



SEE THINK DO: TANIA'S STORY



Context: Refer to the case study about Tania's story and read together as a class.

Age group: Suitable for primary and secondary school students

Resources:

- Compass worksheet (see next page)
- Pens/pencils

Run time: 30-45 minutes

Activity Description:

1. Provide each student with a Compass worksheet

2. Ask each student to complete the worksheet using the following compass points:

E = EMOTIONS:

What do you feel after hearing Tania's story? What emotions does it make you feel? What might you feel if you were in this situation?

W = WORRIES:

What worries do you have for Tania and families like hers? What worries do you think Tania has leading into Christmas?

N = NEEDS:

What are some of the needs that Tania and others like her might have? What basic needs do we all have that might not be being met for families like Tania's?

S = SUPPORT:





Where can families like Tania's get the support they need? What role might you play in helping with this?

3. Share the thinking: Share your compass point responses with the rest of the class. Are there any common themes in each of the categories?



Check out the **HOW TO GIVE** page to see what you can do to support and help people in need this Christmas.

COMPASS WORKSHEET

 <p>EMOTIONS</p>	 <p>WORRIES</p>	 <p>NEEDS</p>	 <p>SUPPORT</p>



12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Here are some ideas for what you could do in the lead-up to Christmas to spread hope and joy!

Age group: Suitable for primary and secondary school students

Run time: 30-40 minutes a day

1

PRAY FOR THOSE IN NEED

Think about those who need God's help this Christmas, whether it's for healing over sickness, loneliness, needing a safe place to live, or something else.

Then take the time in a quiet space by yourself to pray for each person and their needs.

You might also invite your family, classmates, or friends to pray with you at a special time.

2

SEND A MESSAGE OF HOPE

Writing a handmade Christmas Card is a great way to uplift someone in-need this holiday season.

You can put your personal touch by designing the card yourself and adding a message of hope inside. You don't need to write your name on the card, just a simple Christmas message will do. Your local Conference Members will be sure to give it to someone special.

3

CREATE A CARE PACK

Create a care pack for someone in need and drop it off to your local Vinnies store. A care pack might include: A bag filled with shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, hand cream or sanitiser, deodorant etc. You might also like to include a homemade Christmas card to whomever will receive your pack.

https://youthnsw.vinnies.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/HS_Making-Care-Packages.pdf

4

LEND A HELPING HAND

What can you do to lend a helping hand to those who help us?

Could you do some extra chores at home for your parents or carers? Could you do it not for pocket money, but to show you care?

Maybe you could help your teachers at school with end of year cleaning in the classroom. Or maybe you have a friend that needs a helping hand – reach out for a chat, and see how you might be able to help.

5

MAKE NO-SEW BLANKETS

Crafting no-sew blankets to donate to your local conference or soup vans is a great way to help provide warmth and comfort to those in need during the Christmas season.

Two large lengths of fleece material are used, a fringe is cut into both pieces and then the fringe is used to tie the pieces together! Through your creativity and generosity, you can make a meaningful impact in your community by spreading warmth and kindness to people in your local community.

6

CAROLS AND CAKES

Plan and hold a Christmas-themed bake sale to raise funds for those in need. You may like to compliment your bake sale with a carolling performance to spread the Christmas cheer!

Carolling is a wonderful way to connect during the Christmas season, and if you enjoy rehearsing and performing carols, you may like to reach out to a local aged care centre or community group to spread further cheer. You can record your carols and send digitally or do it in person!

7

CREATE A SENSE OF WELCOME

Take time to reflect on what makes you feel welcomed into a space. Is it the body language and tone of the person greeting you? Is it the atmosphere, the feel of a space?

The feeling of being welcomed increases a sense of belonging, and working actively to create this feeling for those around us can do a lot to reduce feelings of isolation.

After reflecting on what makes you feel welcome, try to practice creating this in spaces for others when you can.

8

PACK-A-LUNCH

Some students out there don't always go to school with a full lunch box. Collecting and packing non-perishable items for lunch boxes can be a wonderful way to support families and students experiencing hardship this Christmas. If you don't have an extra lunch box to donate, a zip-lock bag can be used too. Items may include:

- Juice boxes
- Muesli bars
- Tins of tuna
- Soup sachets
- 'Fun size' chip packets
- Fruit cups
- Single-serve packs of biscuits or crackers
- Shelf-stable dips like 'Le Snack'.

9

HOLD A FUNDRAISER OR DONATION DRIVE

Plan a fundraising event and donate the money collected!

Donate money raised during a fundraising event (e.g. Op Shop fashion parade, Minute to Win It competitions, pyjama day) to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal, or donate food* (can be in hampers) to your local Conference so they can distribute it among those in need in your local community.

*Make sure all donated foods are non-perishable

Donate at: <https://donate.vinnies.org.au/donation-hub>

10

SPREAD GRATITUDE AND CHEER IN THE CLASSROOM

Thoughtful, well-chosen words can really make someone's day!

Everyone in the class writes a message on a slip of paper and places them in a hat – this could be a message of gratitude, a message of Christmas cheer, or celebration of someone's work.

Each day in the lead up to Christmas (or when you are in need of a little bit of extra cheer), someone can pick a slip of paper from the hat to read aloud to the class.

11

OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVOCATE

During Christmas, Vinnies supports many people experiencing hardship. Create an opportunity to advocate for those in our community who may be in need by talking to your school about awareness education. Consider:

- Presenting facts at an assembly (see 'Cost of Living Pressures 2024' page for ideas).
- Holding a stall, forum or event that draws attention to the particular issue you aim to highlight.
- Making posters to display around the school with info.

12

DONATE A CHRISTMAS GIFT

There are many children who may not have gifts under a tree this Christmas. You can purchase a new gift (ideas in this pack) or donate a pre-loved toy.

Have a look through your toys at home and pick a few that you don't use anymore - make sure that they are clean and still in good condition! Either as a class or individually, students can gather gifts and toys to drop off at the local Conference or Vinnies store.

RECYCLED WREATH

Context: We are all about recycling at the St Vincent de Paul Society (watch this video to learn more: Choose Vinnies Over Fast Fashion), and this Christmas craft brings together the use of pre-loved items and the celebration of Christmas spirit! Instead of throwing away craft scraps and less-than-perfect art materials, this activity calls for resources such as these to put together a cheerful and unique Christmas Wreath for display in classrooms or the home! Reflective questions around recycling and reusing can complement the activity, highlighting the creative ways we can show love and care for our shared home.

Age group: Suitable for primary school students.

Resources:

- Craft and fabric scraps, old craft materials such as colored paper, plain paper, pom poms, ribbons, popsicle sticks, etc.
- Paper plate, or similar sturdy card cut into a circle (base of wreath)
- Glue, tape or stapler (as needed for materials collected)
- Lengths of string

Run time: 20-40 minutes

Activity Description:

- 1. Collect materials,** students can perhaps help by bringing in materials from home! They do not have to be of Christmas colors, and blank/other paper types can be decorated with paints/drawings of Christmas themes!
- 2. Cut paper/fabric into varying strips,** Around 20 & 30cm long and about 3/5cm in width, depending on the size of the base you are using – this does not need to be precise, and varying lengths/widths will add to the unique creations.
- 3. Cut out the center of the paper plate** or cut a large circle out of thick cardstock and then cut out a middle circle to create the wreath base.
- 4. Use glue or staples** to stick the decorating materials around the wreath, sticking the ends of each strip together while looped around

circular base. This will slowly build a full and layered wreath shape and a vibrant array of color. You can also create paper candles, make drawings of loved ones or create other cheerful images to add to the center.

- 5. Attach a length of string** to hang the wreath. Display for all to enjoy!

Reflective Questions (optional):

- You may have heard of ‘Reduce, Reuse, Recycle’, can anyone tell me what they mean by reduce? (Avoiding using what we don’t need) By reuse? (finding meaning in items that may have otherwise gone to landfill) And by recycle? (to break something down into separate resources that can be used in a new way)
- Why do you think these practices are important? What impact do they seek to have?
- While they are very important, not all recyclable rubbish ends up in the recycling bin. Why do you think this is? (encourage answers that consider people from a range of circumstances, such as those who may not have access to education, or to safety.)
- What are ways we can increase access to recycling for our community? Are there other ways we can show compassion and care for our shared home?



CHRISTMAS DIARIES

Context: For some, Christmas is a time of joy. A time to be around family and friends and to celebrate in each other's company. For others, it is a time of uncertainty and hopelessness. The rising cost of living in Australia means that more individuals and families are turning to Vinnies than ever before. Vinnies is there to support through accommodation, food, referrals and a bit of hope in an otherwise hope-less season.

Age group:

Suitable for upper primary school students.

Resources:

- Ash's Journal print out (1 per group of 4)
- Jesse's Journal print out (1 per group of 4)
- Butchers Paper
- Textas

Run time: 20-30 minutes

Activity Description:

- 1. Split students** up into small groups of 4-5 and provide each group with a print out of 'Ash's Journal', a printout of 'Jesse's Journal', a sheet of butchers paper and some textas
- 2. Ask each group to read through** Ash and Jesse's journal entries
- 3. Ask each group to re-read** each Journal entry whilst considering the following questions:
 - a. How do Ash and Jesse's journal entries differ from one another?
 - b. How do you think Ash and Jesse would each be feeling on Christmas Eve?
 - c. What would Jesse's Christmas look like if it weren't for Vinnies?
- 4. Have each group share** their responses with the class
- 5. Ask each group to brainstorm** some ways that they might be able to support Australians, like Jesse, this Christmas. Have students record these on butchers paper and share with the class

Hint:

- ask students to think about how they can help as an individual, family and school



Ash's Journal

Something that made me smile today...

On our way home from soccer today, my Mum took my brother and I to Mcdonalds for lunch. Because we won our game, we also got to have ice cream for dessert. We are now on our way home to watch Christmas Carols and make gingerbread houses.

Currently dealing with...

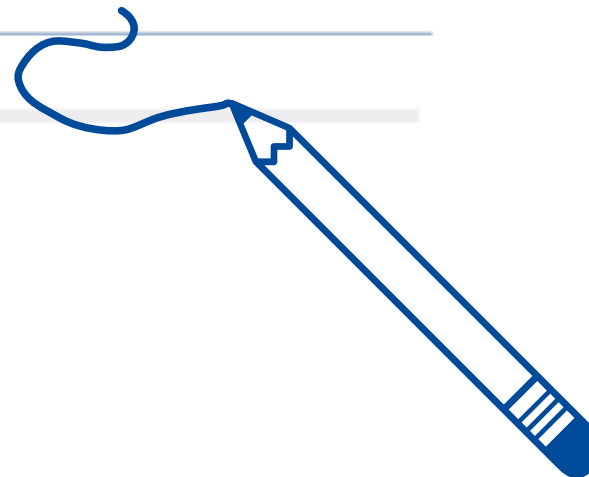
Being rushed for time. I have to finish wrapping my Mum and brothers' Christmas presents in time for Christmas day tomorrow.

Thankful for...

Being able to spend Christmas day with my family and grandparents, and for all the yummy food we are going to eat. My grandmother makes the best Christmas pudding!

Looking forward to...

Getting a new soccer ball as a Christmas present. I have been looking forward to this for a while. I can't wait to kick it around with my brother and sister on Boxing Day!



Jesse's Journal

Something that made me smile today...

The Vinnies Van came around today, like it does every other day. My sister and I got our usual sandwiches and Milo but this time they had a surprise for us... They gave us candy canes and a small present that's wrapped up in gold wrapping paper. Before this, Mum told us that we wouldn't be able to afford Christmas presents this year. I can't wait to open it tomorrow morning,

Currently dealing with...

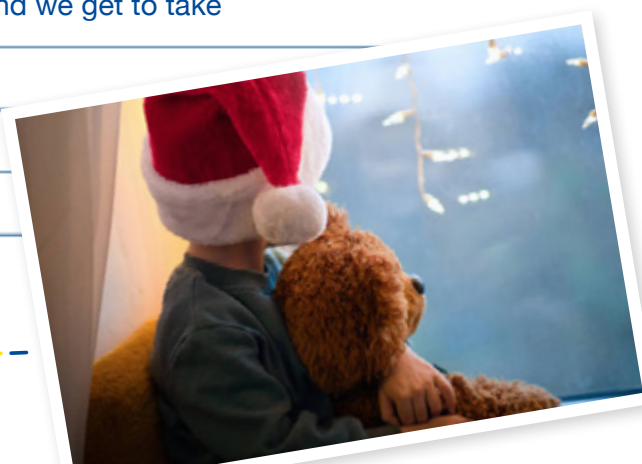
Not knowing when we are going to get our own place to sleep in. We have been staying at a Vinnies shelter for the past month because Mum could no longer afford to pay rent. I have made some friends with the other kids at the shelter but pray that one day we can have our own space to live in

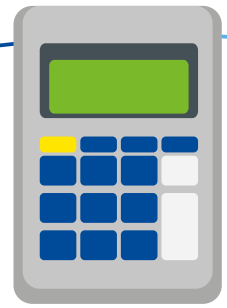
Thankful for...

The nice ladies at Vinnies who help my Mum with paying for our food and clothes. They are always so friendly and make my Mum feel happier and more hopeful.

Looking forward to...

Going on a Christmas Buddies Day with the Vinnies Team next week. My sister and I don't get to do much in the school holidays because our Mum can't afford it. We usually just stay home and play Uno or Snap! together. This year, we are getting to go to a barbecue in the park and we get to take home Christmas lolly bags. I can't wait!





TRUE COST OF CHRISTMAS

Context: During the Christmas season, Australians spend around \$30 billion on food, presents, travel, and luxuries, with an average of \$1,479 per person. This spending not only leads to more waste but also represents a missed opportunity to help those in need. The following tasks will help you explore how holiday spending could be redirected to support more compassionate and sustainable practices.

Age group: Suitable for lower and upper primary school students

Resources:

- Laptop with internet, calculator, pen

Run time: 50-60 minutes

Activity Description: Christmas comes with a lot of costs, and the three top expenses during the holiday period are travel, gifts and food.

Complete these cost comparisons and reflect on the true cost of Christmas.

Travel Expenses	
<p>Australians spend \$10.8 billion on flights and travel during Christmas. Imagine if even 10% of this money was used to provide shelter for people experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>Task: Determine how many nights of shelter could be provided with 10% of Christmas travel spending (\$108,000,000).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the average cost of one night of accommodation for a homeless person in Australia. • Work out how many nights of shelter could be provided with \$10.8 million.
Gifts	
<p>Australians spend \$7.5 billion on presents during Christmas, but over 20 million unwanted gifts are received each year. This represents wasted money that could be used to help those in need.</p>	<p>Task: Calculate the total amount of money spent on unwanted gifts and how this money might be better used.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research the average cost of a Christmas gift in Australia. • Multiply this by 20 million to see how much money is spent. • Research the cost of supporting a child with school supplies. Calculate how many children could be gifted with school supplies with the money spent on unwanted gifts.
Food Wastage	
<p>Australians produce up to 50% more food waste during the Christmas season. More than \$36 billion worth of food is thrown away annually in Australia</p>	<p>Task: Calculate how many meals could be provided to families in need if \$36 billion wasn't spent on un-used food each year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out the average cost of a meal in Australia. • Use this information to work out how many meals \$36 billion (\$36,000,000,000) could provide.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Context: In 1833, Paris, Frederic Ozanam and his friends with the support of Sister Rosalie Rendu formed what we know today as the St Vincent de Paul Society. When people unite to assist a particular cause, people experience disadvantage can better survive, flourish and have a hope filled future.

Age group: Suitable for upper secondary school students.

Resources:

- Serving the Community worksheet (see Appendix)
- Laptop / tablet (minimum one per group)
- Pens / Pencils

Run time: 30-45 minutes

Activity Description:

1. **Split the class** into groups of 4
2. Provide each group with a Serving the Community worksheet
3. **Students to work within their groups to create a mock-service.** Each group will have to agree on a cause (eg. homelessness, asylum seekers, child poverty) and research the topic to assist them in completing the worksheet.
4. **Students to present** their service and findings to the class

Note: students may refer to their local Vinnies website “About Us” page to support them in answering the questions on the website.



APPENDIX

SERVING THE COMMUNITY



Service Name:

Mission Statement:

Why We Help:

Who We Help:

Where We Help:

How We Help:



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE 2024 VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL!

SHARE YOUR EFFORTS!

We would love to see what your school is doing to bring joy and happiness to families and individuals this Christmas. Share your pictures and stories with us by emailing them to your Youth and Schools Engagement Officer or tag us in your socials using the information below.

 Facebook: @NSWVinniesYouth

 Instagram: @VinniesYouthNSW

#VinniesYouth #DoSomeGood



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

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