

Making a difference



St Vincent de Paul Society
QUEENSLAND
good works

Newsletter of the St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland | Spring 2010

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No beds for our homeless women



Housing for homeless women in Queensland has now reached crisis point

Only 43 emergency beds are currently available to women, compared to 384 available to homeless men.

St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland's State Housing Manager Wal Ogle said with recent figures revealing a spike in the number of women living on the streets, the shortage was unacceptable.

"The Australian Bureau of Statistics has reported a dramatic increase in females who are homeless compared to 30-40 years ago," Mr Ogle said. "Brisbane alone has recorded an estimated 4000 women either living on the streets or in temporary housing."

Last month, the St Vincent de Paul Society's Hamilton 'Hope' House opened its doors. It is specifically designed to cater for 14 homeless single women with children as a transitional place to call home.

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Dear friends

The Spring 2010 edition of the St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland's Making a difference magazine shares with you highlights from a busy, exciting period on the life of the Society.

We hope you enjoy this edition.

Peace,

Brian Moore

State President

St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland

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To donate call 13 18 12 or visit

www.vinnies.org.au

To volunteer, call 3010 1000

or email volunteer@svdpqld.org.au

Welcome Brian

The St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland welcomes new State President Brian Moore

Long-standing Society member Brian Moore was inducted as the new St Vincent de Paul Society State President for Queensland in July.

Based just outside Warwick, Mr Moore has held a number of positions within the Society from local Conference president to Diocesan Central Council president of Toowoomba.

Mr Moore said he was "humbled and honoured to have been chosen and trusted to lead the St Vincent de Paul Society in Queensland".

"I hope to carry on the urgent work of recruitment, induction and training of 'all generations' in the Society's good works," he said.

Crisis for homeless women in Queensland

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"I believe the provision of housing for homeless women in Queensland is at a critical stage and much more needs to be done to address long term housing solutions," Wal said.

"We want to be able to help many, many more homeless women, but sadly we simply do not have the resources to be able to do so."



Stats about homelessness

- More Queensland women than males access emergency supported accommodation due to homelessness
- 62% of people looking for shelter are turned away
- 41% of Queensland's homeless are women



Rise to the challenge



Speaker of the House, John Mickel, event MC Madonna King and Ipswich Mayor Paul Pisasale.



Qld's top fundraiser from Mirvac Matthew Wallace alongside BDO's Anthony Whyte.

55 business, government and community leaders made history in Brisbane's first Vinnies CEO Sleepout at the Suncorp Piazza, South Bank.

Raising more than \$340,000 for homeless support services, CEOs including Wotif.com's Robbie Cooke and the South Bank Corporation's Malcolm Snow hit the streets to experience first-hand what it's like to be homeless.

"In the lead-up to the event, I had tried to prepare myself mentally for the overnight challenge," Mirvac's Matthew Wallace said.

"But I now know nothing could prepare you for the experience of living on the streets night after night."

"What we endured is nothing compared to what today's homeless go through and I believe no person, no matter their circumstances, should ever have to."

St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland CEO Peter Maher said it was an overwhelming experience.

"I think each and every leader who joined in the challenge, left a changed person. It put the issue front

of mind and opened many eyes to what's really happening out there every night for thousands of Australians," Mr Maher said.

All money raised will go towards Vinnies' range of accommodation and support services through Queensland, including the landmark *Families Back on Track* project on the Gold Coast, a unique facility dedicated to housing single parents and their children, and a range of initiatives throughout Queensland.

To find out more, visit www.ceosleepout.org.au

More photos on following pages...

About the night

- Nationally, 687 participants slept out across Australia - the first time the event has gone national
- Each participant had 4 sheets of cardboard to make a 'comfy' mattress for the night
- Merlo Coffee generously supplied coffee for the participants
- Rosies Youth Mission provided support on the night



Catholic Education's CEO David Hutton fast asleep.



The CEOs set their beds up neatly at the Suncorp Piazza.



Photos courtesy Jessica Ede, Kat Down, Luise Straker (ABC Radio 612).

A Vincentian Family effort: Staff, members and volunteers helping out on the night.





The crowd enjoying Merlo coffee and Campbell's soup.

- 50,256 Australians sleep on the street every night
- More than 12,000 children under 12 have no home
- 44% of Australia's homeless stay with family or friends
- The number of homeless families with children has increased by 16%
- Queensland has the highest rate of homeless people per 10,000 in Australia

SCHOOL SLEEPOVER

School across Queensland 'experienced homelessness' to raise funds and awareness for Vinnies.



Brigidine College students at their Vinnies School Sleepover.

Inala Family Support Centre is helping in so many important ways

Through the help of the Inala Family Support Centre, Eden and Brock Little are receiving the best start in life.

With the family being supported solely by their mother's disability pension, the Little kids have been given a hand up, not just a hand out through assistance for school uniforms, school fees and a computer.

"I don't know how I would have gotten through without the help of Vinnies," Ms Little said of Brock, 17, and Eden, 15.

Whilst Brock is Vice President of the Corinda State high school and keen to study psychology at university next year, Eden's love of reading, bolstered by the supply of books from the Inala Family Support Centre, indicates she is a budding author.

Both of the Littles "work hard at their goals as they don't want to let people down."

The second-hand computer provided by the Society "means a million dollars to the kids."

"It may not sound like much, but for the kids to have their uniforms, and shoes... they are just so grateful.



"I never realised there was such kindness out there. I can't even mention what it means to us, honestly..."

"I know we wouldn't have made it without Vinnies."

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- **Become a Member of a Conference (local branch)**
- **Volunteer**
- **Make a financial donation**
- **Make a gift-in-kind**
- **Make a bequest**

For more information contact the state office

07 3010 1000

or email: state.admin@svdpqld.org.au

Stats

- 6,912 members and volunteers are making a difference in Queensland
- 147,790 people asked us for help last year
- 325,000 people were helped



Families Back on Track officially opens

The St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland officially opened its landmark 'Families Back on Track' project on the Gold Coast in July 2010.

The facility, which is already fully tenanted, provides supported accommodation to homeless single parents and their children.

Pictured above: State President Brian Moore, Management Committee Chairman Mervyn Powell, Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane Rev Brian Finnigan, State Minister for Communities and Housing and Minister for Women Karen Struthers, Member for Southport Peter Lawlor, National President Syd Tutton, and Gold Coast and Country Diocesan Central Council President Jim Donaldson.



Poem from a Families Back on Track child (written word for word):

*A very special thank you
 You have gave us a home
 You bought us meal on our table
 Without your kindness work
 We would not be here today
 Thank you for giving us Peace in Our World
 To say Thank you to the Community it will
 never be enough
 A very special Thank You its nice to know
 that there are people like you*

