



## 5<sup>th</sup> August 2013

Today marks the beginning of Homeless Persons Week 2013, which aims to raise important awareness about the issue of homelessness in Australia and this year's asks Australians to think about 'the hidden homeless'.

Contrary to people's perceptions about homelessness, only 6% of people who are experiencing homelessness are sleeping rough. Seventy-four per cent of people experiencing homelessness are staying temporarily with other households or living in overcrowded dwellings, boarding houses, caravans or other temporary accommodation.

Michael Perusco, CEO St Vincent de Paul Society NSW says that Homeless Persons Week is an opportunity for Australians to reflect upon the changing face of homelessness and understand how quickly people can fall into the cycle of homelessness and disadvantage.

"It is a shocking reality that in Australia today there are more than 105,000 people experiencing homelessness. This figure demonstrates there is a lot of work to be done to address homelessness and that far too many Australians are being pushed to the margins of society.

"The statistics tell us that the face of homelessness has changed and therefore so must the way we address the issue. It is important now that we work together towards the Federal Governments renewed target to halve homelessness by 2020."

Ray Reynolds, St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President said, "The St Vincent de Paul Society knows that homelessness can happen to anyone. It only takes a few of life's hard knocks to change our circumstances. Sadly our members and volunteers are seeing every day the struggles that people experiencing homelessness face and that their situation is undermining their ability to fully participate in and contribute to their community."

To support the St Vincent de Paul Society in their work to reduce homelessness please donate by calling 13 18 12 or at [www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au)

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