

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Sydney Airport becomes major partner of St Vincent de Paul Society NSW's flagship education program

- **Sydney Airport supports St Vincent de Paul Society with proceeds from Lost Property Auction for charity**
- **Donation of \$136,000 will fund Kids Engaged in Education Program in Sydney**
- **Sydney Airport contributed \$2.6 million to the community in 2015**

Sydney Airport today announced a \$136,000 grant to fund St Vincent de Paul Society NSW's Kids Engaged in Education Program (KEEP), which supports families in need to achieve positive outcomes. This program uses education and case management to support children experiencing homelessness and is based on research, evidence and best practice.

"We're proud that we can support families in need in the local community through our new partnership with St Vincent de Paul Society NSW's flagship education program," Sydney Airport Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Kerrie Mather said.

"St Vincent de Paul Society's KEEP takes a holistic approach to ensure children are engaged in school, improve parenting skills and connect vulnerable families with the services they need."

"With 100 children already participating in the program each year, we're pleased that we can help to expand KEEP through this grant to enable more families and children to benefit from the service.

Sydney Airport and the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW today hosted an event at Vincentian House in inner city Sydney, featuring an official cheque presentation ceremony.

Denis Walsh, President of St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, said the funding from Sydney Airport is crucial to expanding the program further.

"KEEP is an outstanding program and with this generous contribution from Sydney Airport we will now be able to fund a full time program manager to scope and manage its rollout more widely across Vinnies," Mr Walsh said.

Dianne Lucas, Acting CEO of St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, explained the complexity of the needs of the children and young people at Vincentian House.

"We know that by intervening early to improve health and wellbeing, we can reduce the risks of longer term issues. At the same time, by supporting their educational needs we are able to break the cycle of disadvantage in which the children find themselves," Ms Lucas said.

"The donation will also go towards the costs of developing further KEEP modules including school holiday programs."

The support provided by the Society and KEEP have made a difference to the lives of Jane and her son Mathew.

"It has given us time to heal and regroup. Our future is a much happier one," said Jane.

“The classes and workshops helped so much with self-esteem and confidence that we are moving forward with education and work.

“I feel I’ve regained my dignity and sense of self. My son has gained so much from being here. KEEP support was instrumental in getting my son back to school.”

Sydney Airport’s 2015 Lost Property Auction raised a record \$234,000 for charity, which is being distributed to charities including The Steve Waugh Foundation, Dymocks Children’s Charities, Stewart House and St Vincent de Paul Society NSW.

Sydney Airport’s community engagement program contributed \$2.6 million to the community last year.

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