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More and more new people turn to Vinnies for help

The number of West Australians seeking help from Vinnies for the first time has increased by almost 50 per cent as the cost-of-living crisis puts increased pressure on household budgets.

New data shows that in February this year, the number of new clients seeking assistance with basic necessities like food, petrol and clothing increased by 45 per cent compare to the same month last year.

“It’s a worrying trend,” says Andrew York, Vinnies Executive Manager for Community Engagement Services.

“It shows us that people are really struggling with increases in the cost of living, mortgage and rental stress. They just don’t have money left for other essential needs like food, transport and clothing.”

In February, Vinnies assisted more than 2,500 families with 2,300 food hampers as well as with food vouchers and other types of emergency relief.

The Vinnies Emergency Relief line received more than 4,800 calls, exceeding the capacity of the assistance Vinnies can provide.

Andrew York predicts 2023 will only get tougher.

“We are seeing more and more low- and middle-income families being pushed to the limit. Around 60 per cent of our clients are in housing stress, which means they are spending more than 30 per cent of their disposable income on mortgages or rent.

“Any further increases in interest rates will likely lead to further arrears, and place people at risk of losing homes,” he says.

To assist WA families with the cost-of-living crisis, Vinnies WA has launched its annual Autumn Appeal. Read more inside.

Members of the community can donate to the Autumn Appeal by visiting www.vinnieswa.org.au or calling 13 18 12.

Vinnies WA runs the largest volunteer-delivered emergency assistance program in WA. It assists more than 61,000 Western Australians a year by providing vital support such as food, furniture, clothing and assistance with bills and rent and delivers a range of specialised services and programs in the areas of homelessness, housing, mental health, youth services, and financial counselling.

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