

Mini Vinnies

VINSIDER

TERM 2 2024

Thank you for your incredible support of Vinnies WA throughout Term One! We are SO excited to support your work by offering additional resources and activities to continue this effort into Term Two.

We have been deeply grateful for the donations of non-perishable food items, warm blankets, and funds to support our local communities.

These items will allow us to respond to the upcoming cold weather without issue or delay, making a much-needed difference in the lives of our most vulnerable community members.

This Term, our focus is on the significant shortage of affordable housing in Australia as part of our 2024 Winter Appeal. Additionally, we explore why people may seek support from their community and how we can help. We also meet Luke, who courageously shares his story of struggling to secure a rental property for himself and his sick, elderly father, despite working every day. The included community-focused activities and our Winter Appeal Kit will offer opportunities for your students to engage with the issues that Vinnies WA works on while supporting our work through the 2024 Winter Appeal.

Term Two is also a great opportunity to think about scheduling a speaking engagement for the year! Our amazing team has presentations and activities that offer students a deeper understanding of poverty, homelessness, and how we are addressing these issues at Vinnies. More details on these speaking engagements and how to request them can be found in this issue of The VInsider.

Volunteering is also an amazing way for staff and students to get hands-on connections to our work. Learn more about volunteering opportunities and how to get involved below!

Wishing you all the best for a fantastic autumn break and a great start to Term Two.

Zoe Hands, Youth Engagement Coordinator

Team Update!

Youth Engagement Coordinator Hannah has recently welcomed a little one into the family, and will be on leave this year. Vinnies is thrilled that Zoe Hands is joining the team as the Interim Youth Engagement Coordinator! Please join us in welcoming Zoe to the role.

Zoe Hands, Youth Engagement Coordinator, is here to ensure that your journey with Vinnies is smooth, enjoyable, and impactful. With a passion for community engagement and a commitment to making a positive difference, Zoe is your connection to the heart of our shared mission! Contact Zoe with questions, ideas, or areas of support- she is always keen to connect and just an email or call away.



Winter Appeal 2024

This winter we are focusing on the issue of the working homeless.

A drastic lack of affordable housing combined with soaring demand for rental properties means even those working cannot afford a roof over their heads. As a result, more and more Australians are being forced into homelessness – ‘the working homeless’.

Information about the working homeless, activities, case studies, and ways to support them can be found in our 2024 School Winter Appeal kit, www.vinnies.org.au/wa/get-involved/youth-and-schools-wa

Our most vulnerable community members are at increased risk as the weather cools. This winter, Vinnies WA is asking for food donations to refresh your local Conference’s pantry, blankets to keep our community warm, and funds to support families.

If you would like more information about the Winter Appeal or to learn about the specific needs of your Conference, please reach out to youth@sudpwa.org.au



Case Study: Luke’s Story

As housing across the country becomes less secure, it’s people like Luke who are becoming the new face of disadvantage and homelessness in Australia.



Luke works five days a week at a bakery and supports his elderly father, Colin, who suffers from a variety of health issues. “I’ve been on the streets for two years without finding any place while I’m holding down a full-time job.” “It’s not easy. It’s very hard.”

He’s part of a group known as the working homeless. These are people who have employment yet find themselves unable to secure a place to live and spend their nights – in the best of cases – in cars, tents or relying on the goodwill of others.

“I found that I struggled [with the private rental market]... I would be on Facebook and Gumtree messaging ad after ad but they don’t meet our requirements or we’re not eligible for it.” “Some of the landlords were strict on having no pets, so this is where we possibly could have gotten a place, but I just didn’t want to give up my dog.”

The circumstances faced by Luke are tough and sadly increasingly familiar to the St Vincent de Paul Society WA.

While Luke and his father continue their search for permanent and secure housing, there has been a change for the better thanks to support provided by the Society. Our members have helped by providing food, assistance to get Colin admitted to hospital for treatment, and paying for Luke to stay in a motel.

Currently staying in crisis accommodation delivered by the Society, Luke has seen immediate improvements from having more stable housing. The Society continues to support Luke, including paying for a service to look after his dog, as he continues looking for a secure place to call home.

“I’m doing a bit better at the moment, I’ve got the right people around us. What I’m hoping for is long-term housing after this.”

Term Two Activities

Help your primary school students connect to the work of Vinnies WA and the importance of their support through hands-on activities!

This Term, learn why people might ask for support from Vinnies, and brainstorm ideas to support your local community. Access resources here www.vinnies.org.au/wa/get-involved/youth-and-schools-wa

- 2024 Winter Appeal Kit
- Mini Vinnies - In Their Shoes
- Mini Vinnies - Kindness Brainstorm

Looking Ahead - School Sleepout

While we have just begun Term Two, there is a Term Three activity worth an early mention. The School Sleepout is a unique program that offers students the opportunity to learn about homelessness and rough sleeping through an immersive, hands-on event. The event is run at your school either in an overnight or evening program.

The Youth Engagement team is here to help, and resources are available at www.vinnies.org.au/wa/get-involved/youth-and-schools-wa

Speakers are available based on scheduling, so if you have a date in mind please reach out to youth@svdpwa.org.au as soon as possible.

Support Vinnies in Term Two

Want to start the year with a hands-on donation activity that supports people struggling with the cost of living crisis? Consider creating a Hygiene Care Pack as a class!

These packs will be given to young people and adults in WA who are struggling with the cost of living crisis, and cannot afford everyday essentials.

Each pack will ideally include (new):

- Band-Aids
- Bar of Soap
- Body Wash
- Dental Floss
- Deodorant
- Comb
- Hand Sanitiser
- Small Mouthwash
- Shampoo
- Toothbrush

For specifically female hygiene care packs, please consider packing sanitary products, hair ties, and lip balm.

Alternatively, as we enter into our Winter Appeal, Conferences are asking for food donations to refresh their pantry, blankets to prepare for the cold, and funds to support families.

If you would like more ideas on how to support Vinnies or to learn about the specific needs of your Conference, please reach out to youth@svdpwa.org.au



2024 Planning

Get ready for a full and exciting year of making a positive impact with St Vincent de Paul Society of WA!

As we look ahead to the school terms, we've crafted a plan for your engagement, ensuring each term is brimming with opportunities to contribute to our shared mission. Each school is unique, so always feel free to adjust and add as needed.

Term 1

- Establish a Mini Vinnies group within your school or year group to give students the chance to engage with Vinnies throughout the year. Don't forget to order your Mini Vinnies badges!
- Schedule a Vinnies speaker for 2024 to enhance students' understanding and connection to Vinnies.
- Create a "Welcome to Home" pack for those transitioning out of homelessness.
- Consider participating in the Autumn Appeal to replenish much needed supplies for your local Conference.

Term 2

- Continue your work with Mini Vinnies, meeting regularly and offering ongoing learning and engagement opportunities.
- Participate in the 2024 Winter Appeal, collecting non-perishable food and funds to support vulnerable community members through the cold winter months.

Term 3

- Build empathy by participating in the School Sleepout. This event provides a unique opportunity for students to better understand the challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness.
- Maintain the momentum of your Mini Vinnies group initiatives - consider running an educational poster campaign for the wider school!

Term 4

- Wrap up the year on a heart-warming note by engaging in the Christmas Appeal.
- Encourage students to write Christmas cards, spreading joy to those who may need it most.
- Ask students to volunteer their time after school to sort food donated for Christmas hampers, ensuring it is all in date and bringing the spirit of giving to life.

If you have any questions, need guidance, or want to explore more ways to get involved, don't hesitate to reach out to Youth@svdpwa.org.au. Together, let's make this school year one filled with compassion, connection, and positive change!

School Spotlight

Each Term we will highlight the work of a special school that supports Vinnies WA!

Would you like to share your school's successes through the School Spotlight? Reach out to youth@svdpwa.org.au to register your interest!



Meet St Damien's Catholic Primary School - Dawesville

St Damien's has been involved with Vinnies for many years through their Mini Vinnies leadership program and their appeals and drives.

Through this program, they work to assist the vulnerable in their community while enhancing the understanding of social justice issues and Jesus' values to their school community.

They are connected with their local Conference, the Mandurah Conference, and support by running food, clothing, and fundraising appeals.

They were especially proud of the strong role of Mini Vinnies throughout the school in 2023, which developed a better understanding of social justice issues and encouraged more students to want to get involved in 2024. This year, St Damien's is looking forward to developing a unique Mini Vinnies logo, holding their second annual Winter Sleepout, and connecting with other Mini Vinnies groups in the area.

Thank you for your amazing work and support, St Damien's.

Would you like to share your school's successes through the School Spotlight?

Reach out to youth@svdpwa.org.au to register your interest.

Conference Connection

There are 75 St Vincent de Paul Society Conferences in Western Australia. These Conferences are made up of volunteers, or Members, who live or work in a specific area.

Each Conference works to support their communities through Emergency Relief and other programs that meet the needs of their neighbours.

Each Term we will feature a local Conference to share a little about who they are and what they do in their communities.



Meet the Kelmscott Conference

The Kelmscott Conference was formed in August 2018 and offers support to community members in Kelmscott, Mount Nasura, Camillo, and Champion Lake. Their 14 members enjoy being able to care for their community by having bi-monthly morning teas in the parish of The Good Shepherd in Kelmscott, yearly sleepout to fundraise for the homeless, and a Christmas lunch to feed those who have no family to be with and need companionship.

Conference President Bridget shares that they are especially proud of organising a Soup Kitchen, which runs weekly, to feed the less fortunate in the community. Seeing the generosity of those who volunteer and contribute in some small way is heartwarming.

The Kelmscott Conference is especially grateful to Lumen Christi College and Good Shepherd Primary School for their ongoing support.

Schools like yours support Conferences to do their work through your financial donations, food drives, and item collections.

If you would like to learn more about your local Conference, reach out to youth@svdpwa.org.au

Join Mini Vinnies

The Mini Vinnies program supports schools to offer education around social justice issues, empathy building activities, and leadership opportunities. This program is designed to flex to your school's individual needs, and we are happy to answer any questions you may have, and you can review our Mini Vinnies Starter Kit www.vinnies.org.au/media/gqtpmtff/mini-vinnies-starter-kit.pdf

If your school is ready to sign up to participate in Mini Vinnies, or if you would like to learn more about the program, now is a great time to register your interest for 2024. Simply fill out the survey www.surveymonkey.com/r/VinniesSchoolGroupReg and we will reach out with next steps.

Mini Vinnies Badges

We're thrilled to offer a streamlined process for requesting your Mini Vinnies badges.

Follow these simple steps:

- Complete a brief survey with your details - www.surveymonkey.com/r/VinniesBadgeRequest
- Share a brief overview of your involvement with Mini Vinnies.
- Sit back and look forward to receiving your Mini Vinnies badge that proudly reflects your students' commitment.

We can't wait to see your badges proudly displayed throughout the year.

Request a Speaker

Are you interested in having a Vinnies representative speak with your students?

Presentations for up to 40 students at a time can be an amazing way for your students to better understand the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the work we do to support people experiencing homelessness and poverty in WA.

We would love to connect with your students and show them the incredible impact they can have as young people.

Simply email youth@svdpwa.org.au to inquire about a speaking event.



vinnies.org.au/wa

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Acknowledgement of Country

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