

Vinnies

connect

Summer 2015

Homework Club creates a brighter future for children experiencing homelessness

Jacob* and his mother Linda* had endured a year of abuse before they escaped their violent home with nothing except a single bag of clothes.

“We ended up living in my car for two months until we were fortunate enough to be connected to Hastings Accommodation Solutions (HAS),” says Linda.

HAS supports families and individuals who need housing assistance and also offers various case management services.

Linda and Jacob were offered accommodation onsite at HAS and through the service, Jacob was invited to join the Vinnies Homework Club – a program which provides children currently living at or being supported by HAS with the opportunity to access additional help and guidance with their homework.

“After the trauma Jacob had experienced, he was finding it really difficult to concentrate at school and his grades started to drop,” says Linda.

“The volunteers at the Homework Club have been so wonderful – they have helped him rebuild his confidence and are fantastic role models for Jacob.”

“The program has been such an important part of Jacob’s recovery – he really looks up to the volunteers and is actually enjoying going to school now,” adds Linda.

Michael Timbrell, Executive Officer at Vinnies Lismore, says the weekly after-school program – which is based in Port Macquarie – enables participants to spend time with Vinnies Young Adult volunteers and improve in school subjects such as maths and English as well as further develop language and reading skills.

“In partnership with HAS, Vinnies is able to provide a unique and holistic support service for children experiencing homelessness,” says Michael.

“As well as homework assistance, children participate in fun activities with our volunteers including arts, crafts, games, computer activities, team building activities and sports.”

“Life-skills activities to increase education about healthy eating, exercise, peer pressure, good decision making, cooking and self-esteem also form part of this fantastic program.”

“The Homework Club really helps to create hope for a brighter future and is crucial in helping children develop their education; build resilience; increase confidence; and have fun in a stress-free and safe environment,” adds Michael.



In this edition

- 2 Young migrants and former refugees kicking goals in Lismore
- 3 Fred’s Place establishes music program
- 3 NRCF awards major grant to Fred’s Place
- 4 Xavier Catholic College students hit the streets to fundraise for Vinnies
- 4 Your support has changed lives



Restoring hope this festive season

For many Australians, Christmas is not a time of joy and celebration.

Sadly, for many people, Christmas is a time when they will struggle with loneliness as well as juggle paying their bills and putting food on the table.

The notion of buying gifts for their children or preparing a special Christmas meal is out of reach altogether.

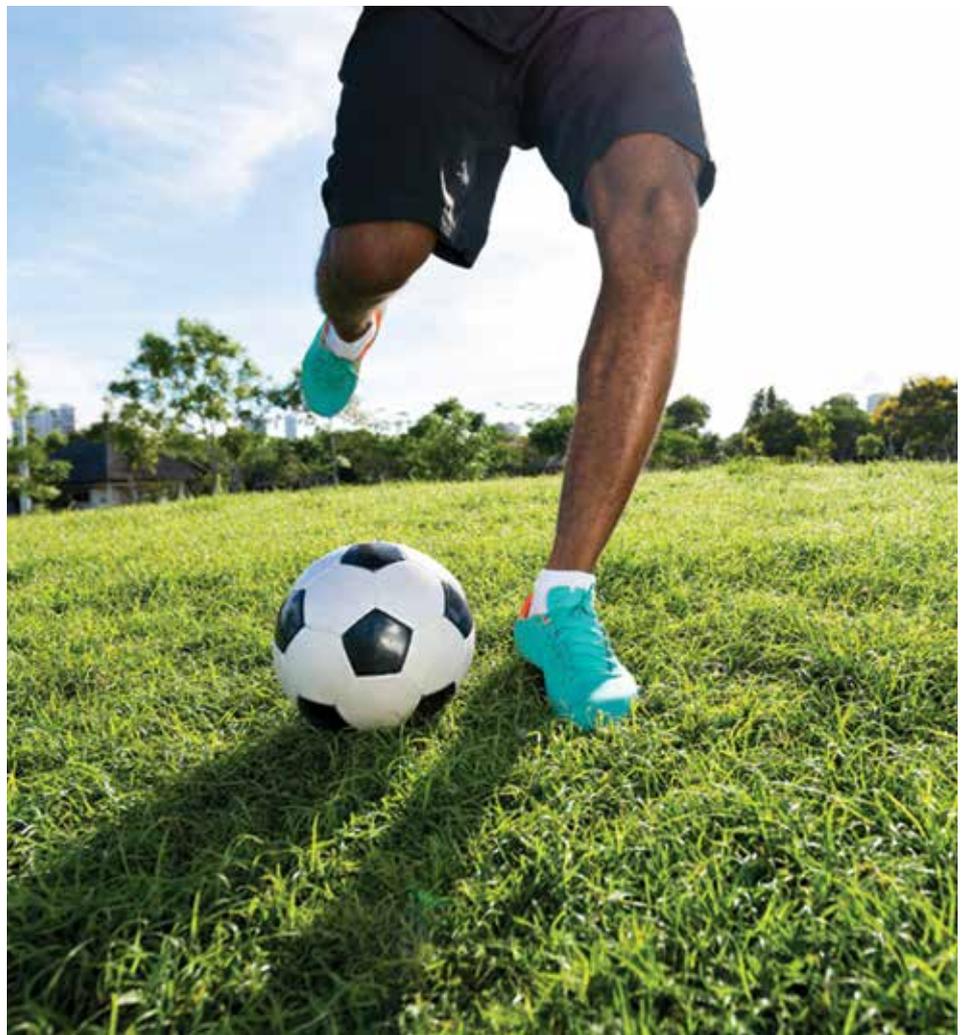
St Vincent de Paul told his followers there are no people so rich that they have nothing to receive, and none so poor that they have nothing to give.

With your support, the St Vincent de Paul Society can make a real difference to the lives of people in your local community who are experiencing disadvantage over the festive season.

Donations to the 2015 Vinnies Christmas Appeal help us to continue our crucial work, and with the compassion and generosity of the community, our members and volunteers can help to restore hope this Christmas and beyond.

Can you please help?

Yvonne Wynen
Lismore Central Council President



Young migrants and former refugees kicking goals in Lismore

A new football skills program for young migrants and former refugees who are now based in Lismore is kicking goals in the local community.

The Vinnies Football Skills Program – a joint initiative between North Coast Settlement Service (NCSS) and the Southern Cross Football Centre – has been fully subscribed, attracting 25 enthusiastic participants to take part in the 10-week program.

NCSS is a ‘Special Work’ of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW. It assists newly arrived migrants and former refugees to become self-reliant, to participate in the local community, and to develop a shared purpose and a sense of identity and belonging.

“The Lismore region is experiencing a steadily growing migrant and former refugee population from countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Sudan,” says Leandro Mendes, Outreach Support Worker at NCSS.

“Sport is often recognised as a major tool to engage and integrate those newly arrived to Australia; however young people often face barriers when trying to participate in team sports due to a perceived lack of skill.”

“The Vinnies Football Skills Program aims to engage these young people, helping them to realise talents; recognise strengths; develop new skills; improve health and wellbeing; form new friendships; and increase self-esteem and confidence.”

“The program is also an effective way to encourage an all-inclusive sporting environment and create a bridge between the migrant and former refugee communities and the local mainstream community,” adds Leandro.

As part of the program young players are educated on the rules of the game; can take part in specialised team sport training; and have the opportunity to undertake training as a pathway towards coaching.



Fred's Place establishes music program

Fred's Place has been awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Tweed Shire Council to purchase a number of musical instruments and establish a music program.

"The Fred's Place Music Program aims to provide people experiencing or at risk of

homelessness in the local Tweed community with the opportunity to build social connections; promote creativity; increase confidence and reduce social isolation," says Jason McDonald, Service Manager at Fred's Place.

"Fred's Place is supported by 30 volunteers who contribute to enhancing opportunities for people to grow, learn and change – as part of the program, regular music lessons will be conducted by our volunteers to further promote collaboration and develop friendships," adds Jason.

Northern Rivers Community Foundation awards major grant to Fred's Place

The Northern Rivers Community Foundation (NRCF) has awarded its one-off major grant to Fred's Place to upgrade the homeless service's laundry facilities.

"Each day, Fred's Place supports over 70 people in the Tweed region who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness," says Michael Timbrell, Executive Officer at Vinnies Lismore.

"Many of the people who access the facilities at Fred's Place either have no access to laundry facilities or simply cannot afford the expense of a laundromat," he says.

Each year, more than 4,000 loads of washing are put through the washing machines and dryers at Fred's Place.

"The laundry facilities upgrade will enhance the hospitality offered by Fred's Place and offer the people we assist greater access to



a basic need service that builds and preserves human dignity," says Michael.

"The incredibly generous grant of \$30,000 from NRCF will enable us to purchase and install three industrial washing machines and three industrial dryers, as well as other laundry items and appliances."

"In addition, it will allow us to create an additional laundry room by renovating a current space used for storage and install a clothes sorting and folding bench with cupboards," adds Michael.



Our Christmas hamper wish list

Our Christmas hampers provide so much joy and happiness to families who are struggling over the festive season. We would greatly appreciate the following items for Christmas hampers:

- ✓ Staple food – tea; coffee; sugar; long life milk; canned fruit; crackers and savoury biscuits; chips; and soft drinks
- ✓ Christmas food – candy canes; lollies; sweet biscuits; long life custard; fruit mince pies; and fruit cake
- ✓ Toys – for both boys and girls, of all ages
- ✓ Christmas items – bon bons; serviettes; decorations; wrapping paper; and Christmas cards.

Please drop-off items to your local Conference, email fundraising@vinnieslismore.org or call 0429 828 586 for further information.

Thank you for your support!

Make your donations count!

Vinnies Lismore is always looking for donations of good quality resalable clothes, books and bric-a-brac.

Profits from our retail centres are used to fund crucial services and programs to help those in need in the local community.

For legal, health and safety reasons, we are unable to accept furniture, mattresses, electrical items, gym equipment, bicycles and scooters, baby equipment including prams and safety seats, medical equipment and household rubbish.

Please make your donations count. If in doubt, please call your local Vinnies shop.



Xavier Catholic College students hit the streets to fundraise for Vinnies

Year 12 students from Xavier Catholic College recently participated in a fundraising drive on their final day of school before graduating to raise much-needed funds for Vinnies.

Over 130 students hit the streets as well as shopping centres in Alstonville, Byron Bay, Lennox Head and Ballina to collect donations from the local community, and in just two hours, had raised an incredible \$2,600!

Michael Timbrell, Executive Officer at Vinnies Lismore, said the fundraising efforts of the students had been amazing.

“The students were so dedicated to making this special fundraising activity a success – their passion and enthusiasm for the cause has been inspiring,” said Michael.

“We are so grateful to the students and teachers at Xavier Catholic College for their ongoing support of Vinnies.”

“The money raised will, without a doubt, make a difference to the lives of people who are experiencing disadvantage in the local community,” added Michael.



Your support has changed lives

Thank you for helping the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW achieve so much in 2014/15.

With your unwavering support:

- More than 400,000 people experiencing disadvantage were assisted;
- Conference members throughout NSW made 173,000 visits to people in their homes, as well as prisons, nursing homes, and hospitals;
- More than 19,995 members and volunteers across NSW volunteered over 1.98 million hours of work to Vinnies Shops; and
- The Society in NSW provided almost \$17 million worth of financial assistance.



Volunteers needed!

Vinnies is looking for volunteers to collect items from donation bins in the Tweed and Northern Rivers region and deliver goods to our shops.

Driving the Vinnies van or being a helper, come and join a great group of locals supporting Vinnies!

Volunteers will need to be available for shifts of approximately six hours on any day, Monday to Friday.

To volunteer or for further information, please email reception@vinnieslismore.org or call Greg Ryan on 0447 123 109.



On behalf of all our members, volunteers and staff at Vinnies Lismore, we wish you and your loved ones a safe, happy and peaceful festive season.

Thanks to your passionate support during 2015, we have been able to help the community's most vulnerable people to rebuild their lives.

Your generosity and compassion is truly appreciated.

Best wishes for 2016!

** To protect the privacy of the people in these stories, we have changed their names and used models in photography.*

This newsletter is produced with the generous support of Ckaos (design) and Lismore City Printery (print).



Please support
Vinnies and help
to restore hope



Donation Form

Yes, I want to
help people
experiencing
disadvantage
have better lives

(All donations are tax deductible)

My details

Title: _____ First name: _____

Surname: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone (home/work/mobile): _____

Email: _____

One-off gift

\$36 \$82 \$214 \$1,000 Other \$ _____

Cheque

(Made payable to St Vincent de Paul Society NSW, Lismore Central Council)

MasterCard Visa

Card No:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Name on Card: _____

Expiry Date: _____ / _____

Signature: _____

Please send me information on:

- Remembering Vinnies in my Will
 Signing up for Workplace Giving

Please send to:

Communications & Fundraising Manager
St Vincent de Paul Society NSW
Lismore Central Council
PO Box 660
Lismore NSW 2480

T: 02 6621 5835

F: 02 6621 9636

E: fundraising@vinnieslismore.org

W: vinnies.org.au

ABN: 91 161 127 340



St Vincent de Paul Society
NSW
good works

Thank you for your support!