



## MEDIA RELEASE

### People in need deserve a choice

When you're facing a huge energy bill, do you turn down the heating or do you go without meals? When you can't make rent, do you fall deeper into debt, or do you confront the frightening risks of homelessness?

"Every day in Australia, someone faces impossible choices like these," said St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President Denis Walsh, launching the 2018 Vinnies Winter Appeal.

"Poverty means making tough decisions every day and every night. Right now in Australia, more than 116,427 women, children and men are experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Sometimes our hostels or sleeping rough are the only options they have."

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO Jack de Groot added: "From 2016 to 2017, Vinnies members provided over \$7 million worth of food, in the form of vouchers or parcels, to people in need."

"Our services are more and more in demand as the costs of essential goods and services, including health, education and utilities, are increasing faster than wages for many low-income earners."

"Others are forced by unbearable circumstances to make life-changing decisions."

People like Jenny who, after eight years of experiencing domestic violence, had the impossible choice of leaving home with nothing or living in fear for the rest of her life. "Fortunately for Jenny and her young children, Vinnies was able to step in after she'd made her brave choice," said Mr de Groot. "The family moved into one of our refuges for women and children, and now, with Vinnies support, they are back on their feet."

"This winter, many more people will confront equally difficult decisions. With the generous contributions of the community, when people take that leap of faith, Vinnies can provide them food, shelter and hope for the future."

Please donate to the Vinnies 2018 Winter Appeal, and help turn the impossible choices facing people experiencing disadvantage into options for a brighter future.

For more information visit [www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au) or call 13 18 12

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