



# Newsletter

**SEPTEMBER 2020**

## **MESSAGE FROM BROKEN BAY CENTRAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT - JOHN DONNELLY**



In February 2020 we had our annual Hamper Newsletter which again highlighted the continued outstanding partnership that Conferences and Regions have developed with their communities over many years. This successful partnership has enabled many more families and individuals to enjoy a far better Christmas Season.

In this Newsletter, which is the first of our quarterly publications, there is highlighted a number of works undertaken by members with the assistance of our volunteers and outstanding staff under the leadership of Gayl Purchase, our Metropolitan Regional Director. Thanks to our members, volunteers and staff, this year not only began with a new structure that saw three Central Councils working together but also a wonderful working arrangement with our Client Support Officers (CSOs) during our COVID-19 isolation.

We began the year with Sydney Archdiocese Central Council (SACC), Parramatta Central Council (PCC) and Broken Bay

Central Council (BBCC) coming together to share Support Services. These Support Services come under our new Regional Director, Gayl Purchase. This is an example of our “One Society” to further enable our Vincentian Ideals to not only assist the people, we have the honour to serve in the Name of Jesus Christ but also to work together to achieve this with our members, volunteers and staff.

During the COVID-19 shutdown many of our Conference activities have been curtailed. However, our CSO’s and their volunteers have been able to be a major support to our client companions. A number of Conferences were able to conduct phone conversations with clients and also, in a number of instances, support them with “letter box drops” of food vouchers etc. We have been able to have our Central Council Meetings as well as meetings with our Regional Presidents online. Our face to face meetings may have been greatly reduced but on line meetings and emails have been greatly beneficial in organising our activities to assist others.

*Thanks to all our members, volunteers during this time .  
Let us pray for each other and for those whom we have the honour to serve in His Name.*

## **MESSAGE FROM REGIONAL DIRECTOR METROPOLITAN - GAYL PURCHASE**

We’re well into our new financial year and while we are far from putting the COVID-19 pandemic behind us, I’m pleased to say our Vinnies Service Centres have remained open to continue to support those vulnerable in our community. This is in no doubt the result of the efforts of our wonderful staff, members and volunteers. While we have experienced a decrease of requests for support from the community we are gearing up for a greater demand after Job Keeper and Job Seeker payments cease. School communities have shown incredible generosity of donations during the Winter Appeal and our schools team are about to launch our Christmas appeal by preparing information packs for schools to ensure that our Conferences and Vinnies Service Centres have donated items and hampers. The Metro Schools team are making contact to

launch the 2020 Christmas appeal and are preparing information packs for schools to ask for donations towards Christmas hamper. Starting in September we will be providing a changed monthly report from all Vinnies Support Centres. These reports will detail how many people were assisted, how much money was spent in support of people in their local community and will have a case study highlighting the amazing work we are all doing in these extraordinary times. I urge all to continue remaining connected on our MAVS website at <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au> for latest advice.





# SOCIAL JUSTICE

## Broken Bay Social Justice Network

The BBCC Social Justice Committee has been active for some time and we are fortunate to have representatives from all Regional Councils as well as members with diverse social justice backgrounds.

To introduce the committee members; Denis O'Rourke represents Wyong and Gosford Regional Councils, Bruce Whittet and Kevin Hardy represent Northern Beaches Regional Council, El Herlianto and Ferdinand Abenales represent Chatswood Regional Council and Colin McKenna represents Hornsby Regional Council. Other committee members include Bill and Carmel Aitken who are very active on a broad range of social justice matters and Anne Sheehan who is involved with a number of charitable organisations including Soroptimists, Anne is also Chair of the Hornsby Homelessness Taskforce. We are fortunate to have Janice Stokes as a committee member, Janice is very knowledgeable on social justice matters and provides valuable advice and guidance to help us prioritise our advocacy work. Mark Ludbrooke from our Lewisham Social Justice Team has been a great supporter and helps us to structure

and polish our advocacy campaigns and correspondence.

Over the last couple of years the Committee has been focused on advocacy work aimed at increasing the supply of social and affordable housing. This has been demanding work as it involves liaising with state and local politicians as well as a broad range of like minded organisations. Progress to date is promising and we are actively engaged with a broad spectrum of our Broken Bay

of refugees and asylum seekers, a situation which has been exacerbated by the Covid Crisis. Bill Aitken is working with Social Justice Around the Bay and Jesuit Refugee Services in order to host a webinar on this topic. The webinar will be scheduled for the afternoon of Migrant and Refugee Sunday and more information on this event will be provided nearer the date. Mental health and wellbeing is a matter that we will be discussing at an upcoming meeting in order to consider whether we can make a



communities including state and local politicians.

A number of our committee members are also involved with the Hornsby Shire Organising Committee which is chaired by the Sydney Alliance. The Committee is beginning to broaden its range of social justice activities to include addressing the desperate needs

meaningful contribution to the issue. The objective of the Social justice Committee is to advocate on behalf of people in need and suffering from injustice. The Committee is open to ideas on the subject and welcomes contact from all interested people.

**Colin McKenna**  
**Social Justice Committee**  
**Chairperson**





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### BEROWRA LIONS FUND RAISING FOR VINNIES

From now until Christmas time the Lions club of Berowra will be donating all the funds they raise from their barbeques to St Vincent de Paul.

They have asked that the money be spent on families in the Berowra, Asquith areas .After speaking with conference president in those two conferences it was decided to shop for items for their clients and provide food parcels and if homeless come in from the two areas then we will provide fresh underwear, socks and food for their clients.

All purchases have to have receipts attached and forwarded to the Lions club as well as receipts for the money donated.

The Lions club will do a big food drive for us closer to Christmas .I went to their first barbeque last Saturday, my goodness what a happy group of community minded people they are. I will encourage conference members attend their barbeques to support and thank them.

The Berowra Lions are have a big event soon and will need volunteers I have asked them to contact me with the details and I will try to send some volunteers to help them with their event. A great way to connect with community in our area.

**Shirley Kelynack**  
Acting Regional- Hornsby



### FRESHWATER DONATION SUMMARY

#### Thank you to St John the Baptist School Freshwater

On behalf of our families in need and those experiencing homelessness in our community I would like to thank the mission team, parents and teachers of St John the Baptist school Freshwater for their fantastic support of our conference over the years. The mission team consists of Olivia, James, Charlotte and Keira who do a great job organising Year 6 and the other children in the school to get involved with the winter and Christmas appeal .

As you can see from the goodies in the photo, they did an amazing job. The children were very excited when we went to the school to accept them. They also held a pyjama day which was organised through the P&C. They raised \$432. I would also like to thank all of my conference members who so generously give up time to help those in need.

**Mick O'Farrell.**  
Freshwater Conference President





## **Congratulations Barbara Healy for being a Finalist of Westfield Chatswood Local Hero**

**Westfield Local Heroes are nominated and voted for by their communities, with the three top finalists per Westfield centre each awarded a \$10,000 grant for their organisation.**

**We look forward to hearing the winners being announced - Good Luck!**

*"Tireless. Selfless. Dedicated"*

Barbara Healy is 80 years old, and the former Chatswood President of St Vincent de Paul Society. Barbara is as passionate today as she was in 1964 when she joined the charity. Barbara goes out looking for people in need of help and feels sad and angry when she can't solve their problems. "I always treat people in the same way I would like to be treated. I try not to judge or discriminate," she says.



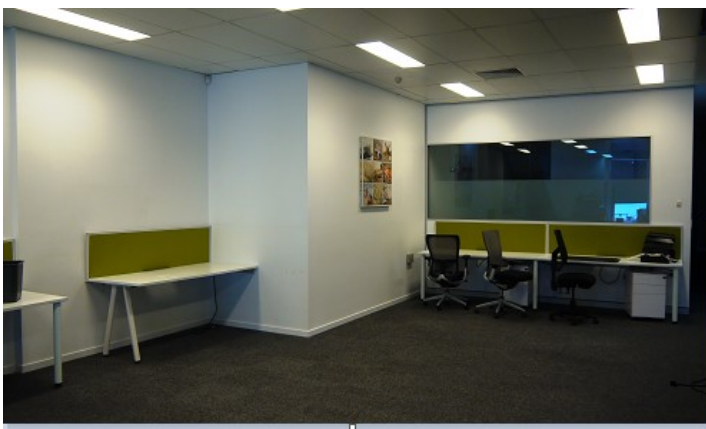
## **FORESTVILLE CONFERENCE - MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS**

- Forestville Conference has been helping hundreds of clients in the local area with
  - \* hampers and food supplies
  - \* nappies and goods supplied by the Northgate Church in Belrose
  - \* nappies from Pittwater, Chatswood and Our Lady of Good Counsel Primary School and
  - \* toys
- Members continue to perform Home visitations, Redfern area client services, Food rescue / Pantry work, Social Justice, supporting overseas conferences in impoverished countries, plus other activities to help those in need.
- Bruno Spedalieri entered the Felix Clave competition – his literature is on Felix Clave. He is the only entrant from Australia.
- Fr. Jose and Forestville conference will be participating in the Vinnies Community Sleepout on 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2020 to raise awareness and funds for the homeless and disadvantaged. Please click below to support us and help us reach our fundraising target:  
<https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/vinnies-community-sleepout-central-coast-region-2020/forestville-conference>
- Launched a Fundraising website:  
<https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-your-way/forestville>



## GOSFORD REGIONAL OFFICE RELOCATION

We have an exciting time ahead in the Gosford Region. Despite being closed to clients due to the Pandemic we are still operational. We take the requests for assistance by phone and email to our Conferences for our Members to complete visitation by phone and deliver assistance remotely and we are still assisting those in the the Community who are without homes by providing material and food support at the door, of course using appropriate PPE and Social Distancing Practices.



The exciting New is that we are relocating. We are moving downstairs to 480 fabulous square metres of space recently vacated by the St Vincent de Paul LAC operations. The Region is enormously grateful to be allocated this space. It is a work in progress at present as our new Gosford Co-ordinator Lisa Dalton commences on the 12th of October and we should be all moved in for the 21st of October. We are all feeling very excited about this new Chapter in the Good Works of the Region.

The electrical and Communications work will be underway from the 28th of September. We are using the space as is, the fitout used by the LAC Operation as it suits our purposes precisely. we did ask for a Pantry/storage space which was built and is everything we asked for and more. We have three Conferences that operate out of the Gosford Regional Office and we now have the space to run groups and programs, offer hot desking arrangements to other services as well as those provided by the Society, making us a One Stop Shop Community Hub with training room, Small Group Space and Meeting Space available for those we walk with, Members and Services both internal and external. Please come back and see us when we are up and running.

**Annette Johnstone, Gosford Regional President**

### **Community sleep out 23<sup>rd</sup> October**

Our local State MP for Gosford, Liesal Tesch will be joining our virtual sleepout to raise much needed funds for our homeless friends In our Region.

Liesal is a huge supporter of The Woy Woy and Gosford Community support Service .

At the end of the program all participants will receive a Certificate of Excellence and items to assist them in their tenancy.



## Woy Woy Vinnies Support Centre Has secured a \$10,000 grant for our Ready2Rent program.

The Program #Ready2Rent will improve the opportunities of disadvantaged people who have previously struggled to secure and sustain a property to become successful tenants in the private rental market. The program will be open for all persons aged 25 years to 64 years old who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through various circumstances, filling a gap that has been identified by many services on the Central Coast. #Ready2Rent will support people who are considered “high risk” for potential landlords and real estate



agents. #Ready2Rent will provide valuable support and information from how to apply for a property right through to ending a tenancy favorably. It discusses various social housing applications, the eligibility criteria for those unable to enter the private rental market and provides information about relevant services. In addition, the program will cover topics such as living skills and wellness, realistic budgeting, open discussions about needs versus wants, communication and presentation skills.

Our Centre, Rosalie’s Garden, is a friendly, safe space offering all who visit hope, trust and respect by giving guidance and reassurance in an environment where all feel welcomed and work towards achieving their goals. At the end of the program all participants will receive a Certificate of Excellence and items to assist them in their tenancy.

Nikki Willmette

Vinnies Support Centre Co-ordinator Woy Woy

## GOOD WORKS-HORNSBY VINNIES SUPPORT CENTRE

Senior Social worker Michelle from Hornsby Hospital, called about a client of hers that has never had assistance in the past from Vinnies, Michelle’s patient was needing the very basics in her house. The client had no fridge she has been in the same house for over 5 years and has never had a fridge. The client was also sleeping on the floor. The Vinnies Support Centre Co-ordinator from Hornsby explained the process and then supplied the client with all the furniture and bedding, and supplied the client with a new fridge. Ever since Vinnies have assisted this client, the senior social workers at Hornsby Hospital have all wanted to give back so they have been collecting from their own pockets providing food hampers and personal care packages for our clients.

**Thank you so much to the senior social workers from Hornsby Hospital !**

Jodie Davidson

Vinnies Support Centre Co-ordinator Hornsby





## A NOTE OF THANKS

Thanks to the generosity of Mercy College Our Lady of Dolours in Chatswood and the families of the Holy Family school in Lindfield, we had over 50 boxes and bags of essential food items donated to Vinnies. Our pantry at the Chatswood Community Support Centre is now packed and ready to assist a broad range of the community with food parcels during difficult times



like we are experiencing this year. I would like to also thank Nick Smith from our Willoughby Conference, Jenny Nolan from our Forestville Conference and Patrick Shanks from our Vinnies Support Centre for their tireless efforts to organise our pantry.

**Christine Anthony**

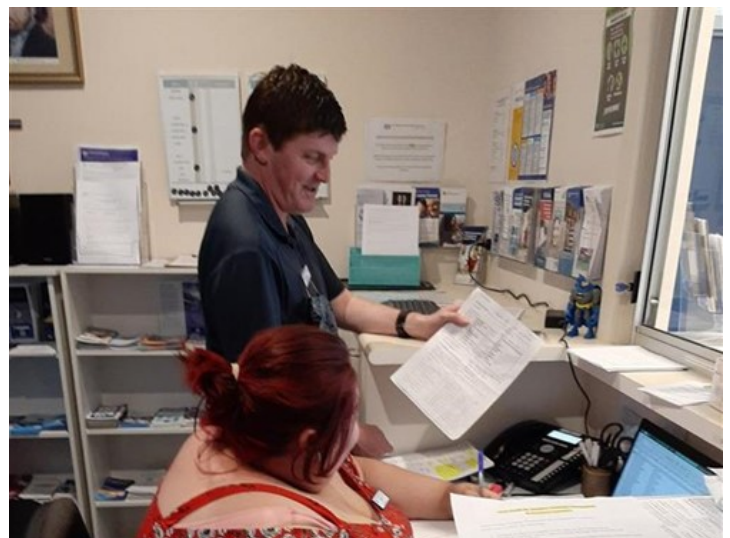
**Vinnies Support Centre Co-ordinator - Chatswood and Northern Beaches**

## Wyong Vinnies Support Centre (47 Howarth Street, Wyong)

The centre is run by Vinnies Centre Coordinator (VCC) Brad Dingle and with the support of the Wyong Regional President Dennis Brady, fellow conference members plus the volunteers, they assist many community members that range from single parents, families and people who are homeless or have no fixed address.

During 2020, we have all been impacted by Covid-19. The main impact was the closing of our conference home visitation scheme, which saw all the community members within Wyong Region being referred to and assisted directly from the Wyong Office. The Wyong office is open Monday - Friday from 9am - 3pm. The services we provide include food hampers, food vouchers, clothing/manchester/household vouchers, furniture vouchers, chemist vouchers men's & women's toiletries packs, homeless food packs, petrol vouchers, frozen food parcels, counselling, AOD Support, NILS & referrals/support. We have seen an increase in new clients coming into the office for assistance, which has been due to the global impact Covid 19 has had on the world, including people losing jobs, unable to afford rent & and a high increase in mental health.

Many of the people we assist like coming into the Wyong office because it is a very supportive, non judgmental and safe place for many of the community members we assist and support.



**Bradley Dingle**

**Vinnies Support Centre Co-ordinator - Wyong**



## SCHOOLS AND YOUTH UPDATE

### Mini Vinnies Formation Program Launch



#### Mini Vinnies Formation Program



St Vincent de Paul Society  
Metropolitan Schools Engagement Team  
PO Box 5 Petersham NSW 2049  
formationprogram@vinnies.org.au

The Schools Engagement Team are excited to announce the launch of the **Mini Vinnies Formation Program (MVFP)**. The MVFP will nurture students, who undertake the project, to be a light in the world, inspired by the spirit of Blessed Frederic Ozanam and Gospel values. The Mini Vinnies Formation Program is intended for ALL students from Years 4-6, regardless of whether they are a member of a Mini Vinnies Group. Participation in the Program is voluntary and students will make their way through three awards: Bronze, Silver and ultimately Gold. The Program is designed to deepen the participant's understanding of the St Vincent de Paul society, its history and the services provided for vulnerable people in our local and global communities.

We thoroughly look forward to welcoming new sign ups to the Mini Vinnies Formation Program in 2020. For more information, please see the [Mini Vinnies Registration Information page](#). Your assistance is appreciated in promoting this program to students/families of students who you feel would like to undertake further social justice formation **in their own time**.

Many thanks in advance for your support with this Program. If you have any questions about the Mini Vinnies Formation Program or any other Vinnies initiatives, please do not hesitate to email Chantelle Smit at [chantelle.smit@vinnies.org.au](mailto:chantelle.smit@vinnies.org.au) or 0429 333 055.

### 2020 COVID Winter Appeal

From the bottom of our hearts, the Schools and Youth Engagement team would like to thank all of the extremely generous schools who have contributed to the 2020 COVID Winter Appeal in Term 2. With many individuals and families experiencing unprecedented hardship as a result of the current health and financial crisis, we had anticipated that this Appeal would be very different to those from previous years. To our amazement, this has not been the case.

We have been overwhelmed with the response to our COVID Winter Appeal thus far and for your incredible contributions, we are sincerely thankful. Now, more than ever, your continued support has gone towards making a great difference to people's lives who have been turned upside down.

To all schools who are launching/continuing their Appeal in Term 3, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude in advance. If you require any assistance with the launch, please contact your Schools Engagement Officer. You may also wish to use the video below when launching/completing your Appeal: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAfl1\\_hnU8&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SAfl1_hnU8&feature=youtu.be)

### Why do Vinnies love what they do?

#### 1 MINUTE WITH VINNIES YOUTH VOLUNTEERS



[Click here](#) to view a short clip of Vinnies Youth NSW volunteers and members, sharing why they give their time to support people in their local communities, and what these opportunities mean for them. If you have any enquires about Vinnies Metro Youth, please contact Kate Conroy - Metro Youth Engagement Officer at [kate.conroy@vinnies.org.au](mailto:kate.conroy@vinnies.org.au)





# FUNDRAISING

## NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout

### We're going virtual!

On Friday 23 October, participants across NSW will unite in a state wide effort to raise important funds and awareness for those in our local community who need it the most. This year,



participants will choose from a number of locations across NSW to support local Vinnies services and programs in that region. Sleepers will nominate a sleeping option - your car, your backyard or couch - connecting you to some of the realities people face when times are tough. Tune in to the event's live stream and let's come together on one night in solidarity to make a difference in your patch of NSW.

Registrations are now open and your support is needed more than ever.

To select a location to join, click here

<https://fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/joinnow>

### FUNDRAISING

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## FUNDRAISING TOOLS

Orders are now being taken for any Conference wishing to use an **Albert Terminal** or a **Personalised Fundraising Page** for their Christmas Appeal Fundraising in 2020.

### What is an Albert Terminal?

An EFTPOS Machine just like you see in Coles or Woolworths, more commonly known as a 'Tap and Go Machine'.

### How can you use an Albert Terminal?

By taking cashless donations from your parishioners as they exit church or by taking cashless donations from the general public at your fundraising activities (e.g. Bunnings BBQ, Donation Drive at your local Shopping Centre etc)

### What does a Personalised Fundraising Page look like? e.g.

<https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/fundraise-yourway/rozelle-region-covid-19-fundraiser-2020>

### Are the funds raised from a Personalised Fundraising Page received by your Conference?

Yes, all funds raised by your page are transferred to your conference once your page closes. Any Conference wanting to take advantage of either or both options outlined above should get in touch with Katrina Ortolan direct via [katrina.ortolan@vinnies.org.au](mailto:katrina.ortolan@vinnies.org.au) or 0411 255 658.

## WINTER APPEAL ORGANISED BY THE YOUTH TEAM

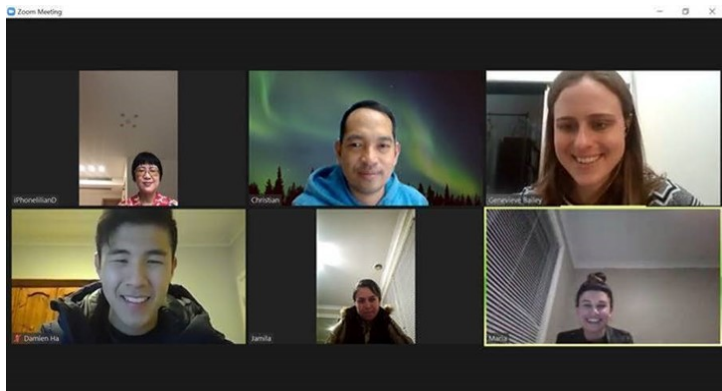
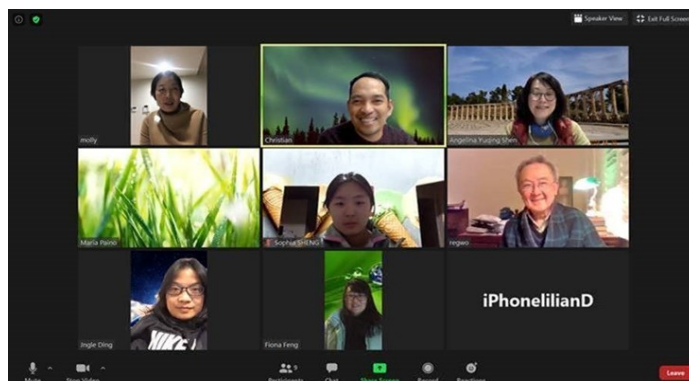
The wonderful leader Michelle Chahine and the youth team organised the Winter appeal for Asquith and Waitara conferences, what an outstanding result! People from the Parishes were invited to drive through, and deliver their donations and then drive off again. People donating were greeted by the most enthusiastic and friendly young people. All decked out in their Vinnies caps, cars with Vinnies stickers, promoting Vinnies. I had asked my conference members to drive through and speak to the young people to make them feel welcome and to thank them for assisting us. All reports back from members were so positive and they are looking forward to working with them again and would like to have them come to a conference meeting so we can get to know them better. It was such a positive experience to drive through and see the enthusiasm of the young people. Without their support we would not have had the Winter appeal, they raised \$2500. Two car loads of food and one large truck load of clothing. I would like their work acknowledged.

Shirley Kelynack



## Conversations Conference, Thriving in the Face of Covid19 Threat (Chatswood Regional Council)

Since April 2020, Conversations Conference has been operating on line utilising the zoom technology to connect with its members and participants across different locations. Conversations Conference members are an early adopters to operate in the new norm since the restrictions were imposed due to Covid19 pandemic. This free service of Vinnies is attended by Conference members of all ages who want to break down the language barriers in our community



through conversations in a friendly environment. Our aim is to help our non-English speaking brothers and sisters to gain confidence through proficiency in English conversation and, eventually, integrate into the community.” The sessions are now being run every Wednesdays between 7 and 8pm for Beginners session and 6.30-8pm Thursdays for Advance participants.

If you know friends or family members who may benefit from meeting new friends, who are keen to learn conversational English or if you would like to participate as a mentor, please contact Christian by calling 9568 0288 or emailing him on [christian.salandanan@vinnies.org.au](mailto:christian.salandanan@vinnies.org.au).

## VINNIES LEARNING CENTRE

Recently you may have received either an invitation to join the Vinnies Learning Centre or a reminder to complete learning from the Vinnies Learning Centre. We wish to make your visit to the Vinnies Learning Centre a positive experience. So to assist you with using and exploring the Vinnies Learning Centre, there is a User Guide that can be located from the Content Library. This guide provides answers to common questions and those you may not have thought about.

Follow the below instructions to access this guide:

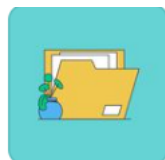
Log into the [Vinnies Learning Centre](#)

<https://vinnieslearningcentre.litmos.com.au/account/Login>

Click [here](#) to locate Frequently Asked Questions

Click [here](#) to locate the Guide

Please contact [Learning@vinnies.org.au](mailto:Learning@vinnies.org.au) for any questions.





## VINNIES PREPARES TO LAUNCH COMMUNITY CONNECT

Community Connect is a one to one friendship program that matches volunteers with members of the community who are experiencing social isolation due to mental health concerns and other personal challenges. Community Connect is the new name being given to the Compeer Program which has been operating very successfully in NSW since 1995. The opportunity for friendship will now be on offer to people who are isolated and not just those with a mental health diagnosis.

Mental health challenges often cause people to become socially isolated. This puts people at risk of experiencing health issues. It's a vicious cycle. Community Connect is aimed at building optimism, confidence and quality of life for individuals thereby enabling them to participate more fully in community life. It does so through the power of friendship. Over the years the friendship program has delivered so many good news stories across all age ranges and cultural backgrounds in greater Sydney and the central coast.

There's the story of Suzanne in her late sixties, who had suffered anxiety and depression ever since losing her mother at an early age. Suzanne went on to marry and have children but when her husband passed away a few years ago, her mental health went downhill. She



had limited contact with her children and she felt desperately lonely. Suzanne's counsellor talked to her about the friendship program and she agreed to join. She was introduced to Fiona, a lady of a similar age. They hit it off immediately. Together, Suzanne and Fiona joined an art group and have met new people. Suzanne regained her confidence. As a result, she has become close friends with a neighbor. She is feeling very different now about her life and her future.



There's the story of Ken, who was introduced to Brett in the friendship program. Ken had suffered a traumatic workplace injury a few years before, which kept him isolated at home. His confidence and social skill ebbed away. His only joy was following his favourite NRL team. Each year when the season ended he went into a deep fog. Ken and Brett were introduced towards the end of an NRL season. Brett had followed rugby league when he was younger and Ken's passion rebuilt his interest. Ken gained enough confidence to actually join the Leagues Club, where he has met some fellow supporters who are just as passionate as he is. Ken is so much happier now that he is engaging in his local community.

At the younger end of the spectrum there is Geoff and Michael, both in their early twenties. Geoff was attacked and robbed in the street a few years

ago. He experienced very high anxiety and isolated himself from virtually most of the people he knew. He was suspicious of everyone and became more insecure and less confident and confined himself to a room at his parents' house. His parents were very supportive and slowly got him up and out again. He agreed to join the friendship program where he met Michael. They shared the same interest in fantasy movies and digital photography and did a course together. Geoff is now feeling that he's almost ready to resume studying and looking for a part time job.

Vanessa is in her mid-twenties and was born in Vietnam. She arrived here as child and had a very different home life to most of the children she went to school with. As well as speaking only Vietnamese at home she always felt lost when everyone at school was talking about the latest music, movies or television shows. Vanessa's sister was a high academic achiever and has a well-paid and successful career. Vanessa is less financially driven and more creative. She became more withdrawn and anxious. Her psychologist referred her to the friendship program and met Sophia. Sophia came from a big family with an Italian cultural heritage. Sophia is bubbly, positive and always smiling. Sophia coaxed her to join their dancing group. Vanessa loved it! Since the COVID 19 restrictions the two catch up regularly on social media.

Community Connect looks forward to many more friendships and to welcoming all Compeer participants, past and present, into the new look program. The friendship program website can be viewed at <https://connect.vinnies.org.au> Contact Christopher Stevens on 0402 834 567 for more information.



## Important dates In the Social Justice Calendar

### Social Justice Diary 2020– resources for Members

For suggested content to be added to your Parish bulletins, or to talk after Mass, or for ideas for your Conferences, please refer to the MAVS social justice page:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/social-justice/>

**10/10 World Mental Health Day.** Vinnies NSW works closely with those experiencing mental ill-health and has seen first-hand how homelessness, unemployment, and social isolation can impact mental health and well-being.

**In October last year,** Vinnies NSW launched the *"Mental Health and Well-being Social Justice Statement"* at the annual Rosalie Rendu Forum. This was a symbolic commitment to do more as a Society in response to the challenges people face when experiencing mental ill-health.

**In August this year,** the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference released their Social Justice statement, *"To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today"*. The Bishops' Statement aligns well with the Vinnies NSW Mental Health and Well-being Social Justice Statement, and is a timely reminder for us to better support one another and break down the stigma associated with mental ill-health.

**On Wednesday 16/09,** Vinnies hosted a Webinar to learn more about the Bishops' Statement on Mental Health, ongoing challenges people face in accessing the care and support they need, and to discuss ways in which the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW can take action.

### 12/10 – 19/10 Anti-Poverty week.

<https://antipovertyweek.org.au/apw-2020/>

Vinnies Build Homes, Build Hope is campaigning for the NSW Government to invest in 5,000 new social housing homes every year for the next 10 years. We are doing this because there are more than 100,000 people waiting for social housing across NSW right now – some of whom will wait up to ten years. At the same time, 37,000 people are homeless. We launched our campaign in September last year. Since that time, in spite of drought, floods, bushfires and a pandemic, Members of the Society have had more than 100 engagements with their MPs and collected more than 7,140 signatures on our hardcopy petition. We need to collect another 2,860 signatures on our hard copy petition so we reach 10,000 signatures and are eligible to have our petition tabled and debated in NSW Parliament. To help reach this goal, you can carry a hardcopy petition with you everywhere you go and ask everyone you are in face to face contact with, to sign the petition. <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Petition-Social-Housing.pdf>

### 08/11 – 15/11 – NAIDOC week. #Always Was Always Will Be

NAIDOC Week this year was moved from July to 8<sup>th</sup> November. The November dates follow the decision by the National NAIDOC Committee (NNC) to postpone NAIDOC Week from the original July dates due to the impacts and uncertainty from the escalating Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic across our communities and cities.

For suggestions on celebrating NAIDOC week, go to <https://www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/plan-your-event>. Some ideas may be:

- Display the National NAIDOC Poster or other Indigenous posters around your classroom or workplace.
- Start your own hall of fame featuring Indigenous role models.
- Listen to Indigenous musicians or watch a movie about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history.
- Make your own Indigenous trivia quiz.
- Study a famous Indigenous Australian.
- Research the traditional Indigenous owners of your area.





## Safeguarding Children Update

As part of our continual improvement towards embedding Child safe practices across the organisation, the Member and Volunteer website ([mavs.vinnies.org.au](https://mavs.vinnies.org.au)) now has a Safeguarding children space:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/safeguarding-children-and-young-people/>

Please feel free to familiarise yourself with this space as the go-to reference for all Society Child Safe information. Safeguarding children and young people so that they thrive in their families and communities, is a fundamental aspect of our work in providing a hand up to those facing adversity.

The Society strives to work with the wider community to prevent all forms of abuse against children and young people and to ensure that the inherent dignity, care and well-being of all children and young people is upheld. The Society is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation and to continually assessing and evaluating its Child Safe strategies to ensure that we are vigilant in our work to support and protect children

## MAVS Platform

### Have you seen the updated Member and Volunteer Support website?

This site exists to share resources, news, contacts, and events with our members and volunteers. We want to provide members and volunteers with the tools, information and resources that will assist you in your service.

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/home/>

We really want to know what you like and want in the Member and Volunteer online resources platform. Broken Bay Central Council has its own page: <https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/conferences/broken-bay-central-council/>

For requested updates, please email [janice.stokes@vinnies.org.au](mailto:janice.stokes@vinnies.org.au)

There are also lots of other updates happening on MAVS which you can check in on anytime here:

<https://mavs.vinnies.org.au/mavs-latest-updates/>

## Anniversaries

### A big thankyou to our wonderful Conference Members who have been involved with Vinnies over the years.

#### Celebrating 15 years of service is:

- Timothy Irwin Manly Vale St Kieran's Conference
- Margaret Gallagher Collaroy Plateau St Rose Conference

#### Celebrating 10 years of service:

- Christy Ratnakumar Pymble Sacred Heart Conference
- David Carson Pymble Sacred Heart Conference
- Mary Jane Trujillo Pymble Sacred Heart Conference
- Paul O' Callaghan Gosford St Patrick's Conference
- Victor Gauci Ettalong/Umina Sacred Heart Conference

#### Celebrating 5 years of service:

- Seow Kiat Forestville Our Lady of Conference
- Robyn Cant Warnervale MacKillop Conference
- Giacomo Dellagiacomo Manly Vale St Kieran's Conference

**Many thanks and happy anniversary!!!!**