



wesley impact!

news

Winter 2023

You have helped
**families facing
homelessness this winter**



There's no hiding from the fact that Australia is currently in the midst of a housing crisis. More and more people are coming to us affected by rental surges and the severe shortage of affordable housing. Sadly, many families are finding themselves in desperate situations they could never have imagined.

Thanks to your generosity, we've been able to help them.

The kindness of people like you who supported our Winter Appeal means we've been able to help families facing homelessness by providing a roof over their heads and the essentials they need to stay warm, dry and safe this winter.

Bella* and her family, who featured in our Winter Appeal, knows only too well the struggles people face in finding somewhere to live, having been asked to leave their home the day before eldest daughter, Mia's, 17th birthday. After months of living in a caravan, they're now happily settled

in their new home, close to the children's schools and their extended family.

"We are absolutely loving it and the change in the children has been remarkable. They have all come out of their shells now and it's beautiful to see them playing with the dog in the garden. I'm so grateful to Wesley Mission and the people who support them. Words can't describe what a difference it has made to our family," says Jodie, mother.

Thanks to you, we can help people like the Marsh family leave homelessness behind for good, particularly in the current climate where demand for our specialist homelessness services is so high.

Sadly, there are still so many families in need this winter. It's not too late to make a donation to our Winter Appeal by visiting wesleymission.org.au/winterappeal2023 or calling 1800 021 821.

*Names, photos and some details changed for privacy.

Flooded out of home

When Amanda* awoke to banging on her front door early last year, little did she know it would herald the start of a months-long period of homelessness for her, her three sons and two nephews who recently came into her care.

The family had been enjoying life in their riverside home in Ballina. The younger boys especially loved its yard spending carefree hours bouncing on the trampoline. But when the Northern Rivers floods hit, the family ended up trapped upstairs in their house for four days, watching helplessly as the waters rose higher and their trampoline washed away.

What followed was a roller coaster ride involving wading through floodwaters, camping out in evacuation centres, and a second round of flooding, which meant they had to evacuate from their new temporary home.

Wesley Mission Case Worker, Cherie, and her team worked rapidly to keep the family in appropriate accommodation, a task made difficult by the unprecedented demand. Over the next few months, they organised stays in a variety of hotels and holiday accommodations across the Northern Rivers area. The family even spent Easter in glamping tents, which the ever-positive Amanda made fun by building a campfire and treating the experience like a holiday for the boys.

"The toughest part was in one lot of accommodation which wouldn't take dogs," says Amanda. "It was really hard for the kids to not have our dog, Miley, around but Cherie arranged for her colleague to look

after him, so we knew he was in good hands which made such a difference."

Eventually, after months of homelessness, the family was offered the house where they remain today. They are thrilled to finally have somewhere they can permanently call home, and the children quickly made friends at their new school. The Wesley Mission team helped ensure they had everything they needed to make the transition into their new home as smooth as possible.

"Cherie was an amazing help in getting a lot of the furniture we needed so I could focus on getting everyone settled," says Amanda. "But I was able to buy some stuff myself, and of course, I made sure Santa knew to bring the boys a trampoline for Christmas".



Wesley Mission provided relief to many people like Amanda who experienced homelessness from the catastrophic floods in NSW. We have only been able to do this with your wonderful support. Thank you.

*Names, photos and some details changed for privacy.

Wesley Mission's longest serving employee

Lover of life, the ever-popular Terry began working at Wesley Mission's David Morgan Centre just after it opened as a workplace for people with disability 50 years ago. He's worked on everything, from portable toilets to car care products to packaging pharmaceuticals, and according to supervisor Rick, Terry hasn't missed a beat.

"What makes the David Morgan Centre really special is its social, supportive community and Terry is just always keen to not only work hard but also have a good time," says Rick. "He gets on well with everyone, and if you're having a bad

day, you can just look at him and know that he'll pick you up."

The David Morgan Centre currently employs around 75 people with disability, giving them a safe and productive environment to work, learn and build social relationships. Unsurprisingly, Terry is not short of friends and says his favourite thing about working there is being with his mates.

"We have barbeques and hot dog days," says Terry. "Four of us went on a cruise together this year to New Zealand, which was fun and so beautiful."

Terry is looking forward to marking 50 years with Wesley Mission in January next year. He's not sure how he'll celebrate just yet but it's sure to involve his two favourite things, friends and food.



Gratitude drives Simon's giving

Simon is a man who's motivated by a particular gratitude that perhaps only comes when experiencing tough times. While Simon and his wife, Eva, now live a comfortable life on the NSW Central Coast, things haven't always been easy for this couple. This, says Simon, is one of the reasons they prioritise regular support of charities that help other people experiencing hardship.

"For us, having had difficulties ourselves in the past, being able to give is rewarding in many ways," says Simon. "It reminds us of where we were which helps us feel grateful for where we are today, in the fortunate position where we can pass on our support to others so they too can get to a better place in life."

Simon and Eva make regular donations to Wesley Mission via a monthly direct debit. It's a convenient way for them to easily maintain their continued support for people in need. They also give one-off donations to particular appeals, or when they feel they can. In addition, the couple has left gifts to Wesley Mission in their Wills so their impacts can be long-lasting.

"We know that our gifts to Wesley Mission will be used on services that change people's lives in a way that's sustainable, rather than one-off solutions" says Simon. "We've always been made to feel valued as supporters and for that, we also feel so grateful."



Regular monthly donations help care for the most vulnerable people in our community. By becoming a regular donor you too can have a powerful impact on people in need and give them hope again. **Sign up now at wesleymission.org.au/regulargiving**

How Isabel* found strength in her community

When Isabel looks back on her time living at Wesley Mission supported accommodation, it is with fond memories of finding safety, friendship and community at a time when she was vulnerable.

Isabel's first contact with us was when she fled her home fearing for her life due to horrific domestic violence. Connecting with our team was a lifeline for Isabel. She had left behind all her belongings and needed support with not only a roof over her head, but everything practical to start afresh, such as furniture, blankets, clothes, toiletries and food. Not only that, she needed emotional support and friendship as she worked to rebuild her life.

She found all this and more while living at Wesley Mission's supported accommodation. She quickly became friends with her neighbours and built a beautiful relationship of support and trust with Wesley Mission, all thanks to our Community Housing Engagement Program run by Liesa.

Even though Isabel is no longer housed with Wesley Mission Community Housing, she continues to speak regularly to Liesa both on the phone and in person. Liesa provides Isabel with ongoing emotional support and practical encouragement while linking Isabel to services that can help her navigate the ups and downs of life.

"When I feel sad or need help, it's still Liesa that I call because I know I can trust her. She brings me food and she listens to me, and I know she prays for me because she tells me she does. That makes me happy," says Isabel.

Isabel enjoys returning to her Wesley Mission complex to catch up with her old friends at their regular barbecues and activity days. Liesa says Isabel's ongoing involvement



is a testament to the strength of the Wesley Mission community.

"It was friendship and community that made Isabel feel safe when she came to us feeling really very vulnerable," says Liesa. "Supported accommodation may be temporary but the connections that people make when they are with us are often very permanent, as is the case with Isabel. And it is just so heartening to be a part of that."

If you'd like to donate to Wesley Mission, please visit wesleymission.org.au/winterappeal2023 or call 1800 021 821.

If you'd like to partner with our Community Housing Engagement Program or donate food or volunteer, please contact us on communityhousing@wesleymission.org.au.

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Reverend Chee gives a gift of a lasting impact

Reverend Wilfred Chee has been a much-loved member of the Wesley Mission community since the late 1980s. A key figure in setting up our first Chinese congregation, which continues to meet today, he's no stranger to the work of Wesley Mission in ministering to a community with real needs.



As a testament to his faith in our work, Reverend Chee has decided to leave a gift to Wesley Mission in his Will. It's a gift that he knows will have a profound and lasting impact, and one which will play a crucial role in helping us to do all the good we can in the community.

"I know the good work carried out by Wesley Mission and I consider it a worthy cause to support," says Reverend Chee. "I hope others will see the same and consider contributing as well."

The lives of those disadvantaged and marginalised can be transformed by everyday Australians like Reverend Chee leaving a gift to Wesley Mission in their Will. For over 200 years, these legacies have helped us strengthen the vulnerable, comfort the lonely and give hope for a brighter future. To discuss how you can make a powerful impact for generations to come by leaving a gift to Wesley Mission in your Will, please call Steve Burfield on (02) 9263 5561.

Upcoming Wesley Mission Wills Days

Have an independent solicitor prepare your simple Will for a fraction of the cost.

24 August 2023

Dalmar House, Carlingford

26 October 2023

Level 4, 220 Pitt Street, Sydney

Visit wesleymission.org.au/wesley-wills-days to book your place today.

Put pokies in their place

There are 87,000 poker machines in NSW, and in 2022 people in NSW lost \$8.1 billion to them. That's the equivalent of \$1,000 for every man, woman and child in NSW.

Every day, many of Wesley Mission's programs and services come into contact with individuals and families harmed by gambling.

This is why Wesley Mission has chosen to speak up and advocate for gambling reform and increased

measures to reduce gambling harm.

Leading a growing coalition of community organisations, Wesley Mission launched the 'Put Pokies in their Place' campaign last November, aimed at making gambling reform a key issue in the recent NSW state election.

We were able to bring pressure to bear on both the major parties to release gambling reform policies, but there is still a lot to do to bring about

the real and lasting change required to stem the tide of gambling related harm in NSW.

We believe a key to achieving this will be the introduction of a mandatory cashless gambling card that will enable users to set daily, weekly and yearly loss limits to minimise harm. This will also have an immediate impact on reducing the amount of criminal money laundering and gambling with the proceeds of crime in pubs and clubs.

If you'd like to learn more about Wesley Mission's advocacy on gambling reform, visit: wesleymission.org.au/put-pokies-in-their-place/

Yes, I'll give practical support to people in crisis.

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 Online: wesleymission.org.au/impactnews_winter2023

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