



SLEEP AT THE 'G WHAT A NIGHT!

More than 850 compassionate people raised over \$780,000 for youth homelessness in May during the return of our flagship event: Sleep at the 'G. It was a heartwarming sight as a procession of sleepers -at-the-'G, decked out in blankets and sleeping bags, crossed Yarra Park to spend the night sleeping on concrete in the cold walkways of the MCG.

Our fundraisers enthusiastically embraced various activities throughout the night: from mindful mandala-colouring sessions and moments of meditation to joining together in a lively sing-along. But it was the powerful testimony from those with lived experience of homelessness that really brought home the reality of the urgent need to provide more support for people without a safe place to sleep.

Funds raised will contribute to the construction of safe homes and the provision of support for young people experiencing homelessness.

A heartfelt thank you to every single person who played a role in making this event a success! And a special shout-out to our sleepers, and their generous supporters. Thank you all.

If you would like to support any of our programs in this newsletter, please donate online.



Homelessness Week



A HEARTFELT MESSAGE FROM VICKI...

It was fantastic to have our signature event, "Sleep at the 'G,'" back again this May! This year's event was particularly impactful thanks to the young people who shared their experiences of homelessness. Their inspiring stories reminded us all of the critical urgency of our work and it reinforced the importance of our donor's support.

This sentiment was echoed during Homelessness Week, as we joined others in the sector on the steps of Parliament House to advocate for more social housing.

I want to express my sincere thanks for your ongoing support of Melbourne City Mission. Our staff work across a wide range of areas such as homelessness, disability, education, and palliative care. Your support reinforces to staff that, regardless of their role, they feel valued for the incredible work they do in the community.

Thank you for continuing to make this a better world through your support!

Vicki Sutton
CEO



MCM is Victoria's first dedicated youth housing provider!

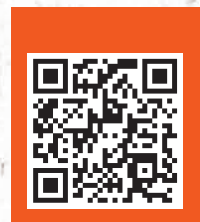
Stable, secure, and affordable housing is an essential foundation for a young person's mental wellbeing, social connections, education, and employment. However, many young people are not able to access such opportunities, leading to cycles of homelessness and disadvantage.

MCM Housing is working to reduce youth homelessness in Victoria and disrupt those disadvantages associated with housing insecurity. MCM and MCM Housing together have developed the Youth Housing Initiative (YHI), which has been designed to support young people experiencing homelessness and other complex needs to transition to independence.

The best part? This is just the beginning! We plan to expand our housing development initiatives in the coming years, with the goal of being the leading community housing organisation for young people in Victoria.

Our Goals

-  **For tenants:** We provide housing to fill the housing gap for all young people
-  **Housing:** In local communities will be environmentally designed and influenced by young people with lived experience
-  **Financial sustainability:** We make our homes financially sustainable for our young people and MCM Housing
-  **Measuring success:** Evaluation of outcomes for continuous and positive impact
-  **Advocacy:** We advocate to improve housing access and financial support for all young people



Putting your donations to work:

ADVOCATING FOR MORE SOCIAL HOUSING

During Homelessness Week (7-13 August), Melbourne City Mission partnered with others in the sector to urge action from State and Federal Governments. Our goal was clear: to advocate for at least 6,000 new social houses annually in Victoria and promote a comprehensive National Plan to End Homelessness.

This initiative, coordinated through the Victorian Homelessness Network, united MCM with fellow providers to highlight the urgent need for housing amid the escalating housing crisis. To illustrate our point, we adorned the steps of Victoria's Parliament House with 6,000 colourful origami houses.

The eye-catching display aimed to raise awareness about homelessness and shed light on the crucial role of organisations like Melbourne City Mission, which offer support and resources to those facing housing insecurity.

The 2021 Census highlighted the dire reality that 30,660 Victorians, including 7,628 children and young individuals aged 12 to 24, are without a home. MCM is passionate about driving positive changes to address homelessness. It's an urgent priority, as the social housing waitlist currently sits at a staggering 57,000 households.



Minister for Housing, Colin Brooks, with MCM CEO, Vicki Sutton.



With every donation to MCM, you help to create a more just and inclusive society. Thank you!

"SCHOOL PHOBIA'S A NATIONAL PROBLEM"

... BUT NOT AT HESTER HORN BROOK ACADEMY!



MCM's Hester Hornbrook Academy was in the spotlight recently when ABC News highlighted the Academy's success in tackling "school phobia": an alarming national trend that has been on the increase since COVID-19.

Lockdowns hit Victorian schools particularly hard, causing disruption for students, educators and parents alike. Hester Hornbrook's Principal, Sally Lasslett, told ABC News that our no-fee independent school was focussed on practical solutions. "Anything that is a barrier needs to be resolved," she said.

The school's approach is to work collaboratively with students to remove any potential barriers to school attendance. This includes support with the cost of public transport to get to and from school as

well as free student meals cooked on-site for breakfast and lunch. Students also have access to an open pantry to take provisions home.

Practical support and access to education for some of the most vulnerable young people in our community: that's just one way your support for Melbourne City Mission helps to make this a better world.



Mental Health and Homelessness: intrinsically linked.

In 2022, a staggering 92% of young people seeking help at MCM's Frontyard were dealing with mental health issues. Many had escaped violent or traumatic family situations, and being homeless only worsened their mental health.

Research shows that once these young people have stable, supported housing, their need for mental health assistance decreases. Your donations contribute to vital MCM services like Frontyard, Youth Refuges, and Foyers, which are crucial starting points for their recovery and can make a real difference in helping these young people turn their lives around. However, there's a critical shortage of dedicated housing options for youth.

Investing in more youth housing is urgently needed. It will give young people struggling with mental health challenges a safe and secure place to focus on their recovery and future goals.

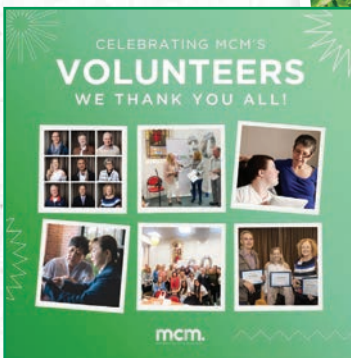


Volunteer to combat loneliness

Far too many seniors in our community are lonely and isolated. That's why there is such growing demand for our Community Visitors' volunteers.

Through this compassionate outreach, our amazing volunteers form meaningful connections with elderly people living in Government funded aged care homes or in their own homes. Volunteers provide companionship and support to clients, and they tell us it's an incredibly rewarding role.

"My favourite part of volunteering is listening to the stories Eunice tells me from her past and seeing Eunice's smile when I walk into her room. I really enjoy my time with Eunice and recommend others jump on board"



Improving access to our Palliative Care services

The growing number of Victorians who receive assistance from our Palliative Care services come from all walks of life and different cultural backgrounds.

We actively strive to enhance the accessibility of our Palliative Care services for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. That's why we have translated our valuable information resources into the seven predominant languages: Arabic, Assyrian, Greek, Italian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Turkish.

Thanks to the support of our generous donors, Palliative Care Services are now even more accessible to more families in need. We recently introduced an afternoon shift to extend our support to even more individuals and their loved ones. The decision to implement this afternoon shift was influenced by valuable input from clients and caregivers and a growing demand for extended service hours.



We couldn't continue to do what we do without the support of people like you.

Youth Housing Initiative:

Addressing the gap – Finding the solution.

Stable, secure, and affordable housing is crucial for a young person's well-being.

MCM identified a distinct gap in youth homelessness services for young people with complex mental health and behavioural issues, who are most at risk of chronic homelessness as adults with untreated, long-term mental health issues.

With philanthropic support, MCM has developed the Youth Housing Initiative (YHI) pilot program. YHI offers three housing tiers

with support for up to 4 years, allowing a smoother transition to independence and empowering young people to navigate this crucial phase of their lives with resilience.

With the ongoing support of our philanthropic partners, YHI is set to be another example of MCM identifying a need in the community and finding a solution to ensure every person has the opportunity to live their best life.



Your Generosity Transforms Lives!

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR WINTER APPEAL

Mitchell was removed from his family home when he was 10, after experiencing horrific abuse throughout his childhood. He spent his early 20's living in squats, couch-surfing and 'rough sleeping' on the streets with his loyal companion, Max the beagle.

This young man first connected with MCM during the challenges of the pandemic and the isolation of lockdowns. Our team worked with Mitchell and others like him to provide stable housing and support including counselling, mental health, case management, housing workers, and healthcare services.

In gratitude, Mitchell shared his experience in our Winter Appeal: and his uplifting story inspired many generous Australians to support our work. Now living in stable housing, Mitchell's journey exemplifies the impact of the Mission's work and what you make possible through your kind donations. People like Mitchell are so very grateful for your support.



Thank you for keeping our communities strong,

Donate online at mcm.org.au/makeanimpact or call **1300 364 507**

mcm.
melbourne city mission

MCM places people at the centre of what we do



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the waterways and lands where we work. We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We commit to ensuring everyone we work with is safe, empowered, supported and respected, especially children and young people. We support and celebrate diversity of race, culture, ability, gender, sexuality and gender identity.