A PATHWAY TO Social Justice

AN INVITATION TO JOIN US IN
CONSIDERING AUSTRALIA'S FUTURE

THE SALVATION ARMY

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Mission

The Salvation Army Australia is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus.

We share the love of Jesus by:

- **Caring for people**
- **Creating faith pathways**
- **Building healthy communities**
- **Working for justice**

Vision

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight, alongside others, to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Values

Recognising that God is already at work in the world, we value:

- **Integrity**
- **Compassion**
- **Respect**
- **Diversity**
- **Collaboration**

We commit ourselves in prayer and practice to this land of Australia and its people, seeking reconciliation, unity, and equity.

Statement of recognition

The Salvation Army acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional custodians of all the lands throughout Australia and recognises their continuing connection to their culture, lands, and waters. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Foreword

Friends,

The experience of the year 2020 has shone a bright spotlight on how much disadvantage and injustice there is in Australia. It has also shone a spotlight on the extraordinary resilience of Australians.

As challenging as the year has been, it has also given us great hope. During the fires and through the COVID-19 response we have seen government and communities rally to achieve great things. We see people helping each other, finding new ways to connect and thinking critically about what the future *should* look like.

The Salvation Army is committed to creating an environment where all people can flourish in all dimensions of life. We recognise that to truly flourish, people must have their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs met.

This report is part of The Salvation Army's contribution to the growing conversation about how we can use the opportunities presented by 2020 to reshape our society so that people can flourish.

There are very real problems in Australia, but there are also very real solutions.

The Salvation Army's vision is:

"Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight, alongside others, to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus."

In this report we have identified just some of the pressing issues we need to confront, along with practical steps we can take as a nation, a community and as individuals to make a real difference.

Together we can seize the opportunity of 2020 and transform Australia.

Lyn Edge (Lieut. Colonel)
Secretary for Mission
The Salvation Army Australia Territory

> "There is no improving the future, without disturbing the present."
>
> *Catherine Booth*

Contents

3 FOREWORD

4 CONTENTS

5 INJUSTICE, DISADVANTAGE, HARDSHIP

5 So what should Australia look like?

6 EVERY PERSON'S BASIC NEEDS ARE MET

7 Shelter

8 Safety

9 Basic Income

10 EVERYONE IS INCLUDED

11 Social Inclusion

12 Gender Equity

13 Discrimination

14 Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people

15 EQUALITY VS EQUITY VS SOCIAL JUSTICE

16 HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

17 Young People

18 Education

19 BUILDING A BETTER AUSTRALIA

20 REFERENCES

Injustice, disadvantage, hardship

Most Australians have an intuitive understanding of what injustice, disadvantage and hardship mean. We have an image in our minds of a child going hungry or an adult shivering on a cold winter's night, but disadvantage has many other faces too.

At The Salvation Army we work closely with people who have concrete experience of injustice, disadvantage and hardship. We are committed to helping them in a holistic way. We want to help people overcome the hardship they are experiencing. We also want to look behind and examine what systems and structures lead to and hold people in hardship, and those that can help people step out of hardship.

Working with people in really tough situations has shown us that people thrive when the drivers of disadvantage are removed. Every day we see resilience, compassion and capacity for change. It gives us hope and confidence that if we work together we can become a nation without hardship, disadvantage or injustice.

SO WHAT COULD AUSTRALIA LOOK LIKE?

Australia could look like a country where everyone has the chance to thrive and not just survive. Australia should be a country where:

- **Every person's basic needs are met**
- **Every person is welcome and included**
- **Every person can have hope for the future**

In 2019/20, The Salvation Army assisted more than 193,000 people and provided more than one million sessions of care.

Every person's basic needs are met

It might be shocking, but right now not everyone in Australia has a safe place to sleep or enough food to eat. We talk about basic needs as being the need for shelter (somewhere safe to sleep), safety (not being afraid in your own home) and income (having enough money to afford food, power and everyday expenses like that).

In Australia today 3.24 million people live in poverty.[1] That means the household they live in does not have enough money to be able to achieve an acceptable standard of living. There are lots of different ways to measure poverty and what 'acceptable' looks like can be subjective. We can be fairly certain that if a person cannot meet their basic physical needs (somewhere safe to sleep, food and electricity) then they are living in poverty no matter what measure is used.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic consequences of the steps we have taken to protect public health, it is likely that even more Australians will be living in poverty by 2021.

Poverty is not the only reason a person may not be having their basic needs met. In Australia we have an ongoing problem with family and domestic violence that means that some people are not safe, even in their own homes. Poverty does not cause family violence, but it can make it harder for victim-survivors to escape and build a life after violence.

Shelter

YOU SHOULD HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO SLEEP

116,427
people are homeless

15,872
children are homeless

Most of us take for granted having a place to call home.

A safe place to sleep makes every other part of life easier. It is easier to do well in school when you have a well-lit warm place to do homework. It's easier to perform well in interviews and at work when you have a place to shower and launder your clothes. Imagine studying when you do not have anywhere to do homework, applying for jobs when you do not have anywhere to clean your clothes for an interview or trying to meet up with friends when you do not have anywhere to shower.

Homelessness is a widespread and serious issue in Australia. 116,427 people were counted as being homeless on Census night in 2016. That was an increase from 102,439 in 2011.

Children made up 15,872 of the total number of people experiencing homeless or 14 per cent of the total national homeless population. In 2017-18, roughly one in every six people accessing Specialist Homelessness Services were under ten years old (17 per cent or more than 47,700 clients).[2] In 2018-19 a fifth (20 per cent) of all support periods provided by The Salvation Army homelessness services were for children under ten.

Homelessness can affect children in many ways. When a child has no safe place to sleep at night, it can become increasingly difficult to stay engaged in education, with the increased likelihood of developing academic and learning delays, not going to school at all or leaving school early. Children experiencing homelessness also tend to experience emotional isolation and difficulty relating to their peers, along with difficulties making and keeping friends. Most importantly, experiencing homelessness has an impact on both the physical and mental health of children.[3]

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

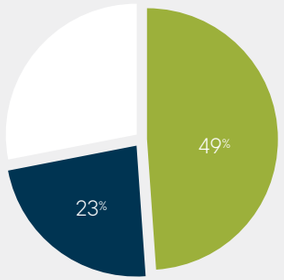
AS A NATION *we can make sure there is a sufficient supply of homes that meet the needs of people who find themselves homeless. This will require national leadership and cooperation between different levels of government, the private sector and the not-for-profit sector.*

AS A NATION *we can also ensure that people have adequate income so that they can maintain private accommodation. A key way to do this is to ensure that Australia's welfare system provides enough income support and rental assistance to allow a person to keep a roof over their heads.*

AS A COMMUNITY AND AS INDIVIDUALS *we can acknowledge homelessness as a major issue and treat people who find themselves homeless with dignity and respect. For example, if you pass someone who is experiencing homelessness, acknowledge them and say hello. The Big Issue magazine is a fortnightly, independent magazine that is sold on the streets by people experiencing homelessness, marginalisation and disadvantage. Consider purchasing a copy from a vendor and stop for a chat.*

2.2 million
Australians have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner

3.6 million
Australians have experienced emotional abuse from a partner



The Salvation Army found that 49 per cent of single parent respondents were homeless due to family and/or domestic violence and 23 per cent of all respondents identified family and/or domestic violence as a contributing reason to homelessness.

Safety

YOU SHOULD FEEL SAFE IN YOUR OWN HOME

Many of us tend to think of home as a safe place. That is sadly not the case for everyone. Unfortunately, Australia has an enduring problem with family violence.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016 Personal Safety Survey, 2.2 million Australians have experienced physical and/or sexual violence from a partner and 3.6 million Australians have experienced emotional abuse from a partner.[4]

One in six women have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or previous partner and one in four have experienced emotional abuse. In 2016 – 17 on average 17 adults were hospitalised every day due to physical violence by a partner or other family member.[5]

Family violence is one of the main reasons people need to come to The Salvation Army for homelessness services. From 2 December 2019 to 10 January 2020, a Salvation Army homelessness research project surveyed 292 respondents. We found that 49 per cent of single parent respondents were homeless due to family and/or domestic violence and 23 per cent of all respondents identified family and/or domestic violence as a contributing reason to homelessness.[6]

Exposure to violence is a form of child abuse. It can impact children's emotional, psychological and physical development.[7] It also increases children's risk of mental health issues, behavioural and learning difficulties and placements into out-of-home care.[8]

Family violence is not always physical. Financial abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse or coercive control can be less obvious but just as harmful as physical violence. All these forms of abuse cause immediate and lasting harm to victim-survivors as well as others, especially children, who witness it.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can ensure that when victim-survivors seek help they receive the help they need. That means ensuring that there is sufficient funding for support but also that the support meets the needs of victim-survivors and their children in terms of their physical safety and also their ability to continue to be employed, pursue education and be connected with their community.*

AS A NATION AND AS INDIVIDUALS *we can hold perpetrators accountable. Right now, accessing support can requires the victim-survivor to leave the family home, which leaves them in a precarious position.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can be careful how we speak about family violence and call out people and organisations that use language that minimises or seeks to excuse violence against women.*

And if someone tells you, explicitly or through subtle hints, that they are experiencing family violence believe them. If you can, help them access support. If it is safe to do so you can ring 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or go to www.1800respect.org.au and use the web chat.

AND ALWAYS, if you hear or suspect someone is in immediate danger call the police on 000.

Basic Income

YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO AFFORD NECESSITIES

There are some basic things that everyone needs to be able to pay for. These are things like food, accommodation, medicine, transport and electricity. In 2020 we've seen very clearly that to function in society we also need to be able to afford access to the internet to work, study or interact with services.

Around 3.24 million people in Australia cannot afford these basic necessities.[9] Not being able to afford these basics can have devastating impacts on health, mental health, and social connection.

Although people can find themselves in poverty for a range of reasons, one of the key causes is unemployment. In Australia we have a welfare system that is designed to work as a safety net to keep people out of poverty. It is not working.

Prior to the introduction of the Coronavirus Supplement in April 2020 the main welfare payment for people who are unemployed, the JobSeeker Payment, gave people about $40 a day to cover all expenses. After paying for accommodation, most of our clients were left with around $17 a day to cover everything else.

Around 3.24 million people in Australia live in poverty

While a person living with extreme frugality may be able to 'make do' for a short period of time, even the slightest disruption can lead to disaster. Additionally, having this extremely low level of income can force people to make decisions that have the effect of trapping them in poverty. For example, a person reliant on welfare might:

- **Move to cheaper accommodation, but then have to spend more on transport to seek employment and get their children to school.**
- **Cancel their mobile device and internet plans, but then find that lack of connectivity affects their ability to find jobs and schedule interviews.**
- **Sacrifice medical appointments, taking medication or following an appropriate diet to be able to afford rent, but then find themselves hospitalised with a deteriorating condition.**

When you do not have enough income, you can also become vulnerable to predatory lending practices. These involve loans that have conditions attached to them that make it very difficult to pay them back and become free of debt and often involve very high interest rates adding to everyday expenses. Unlike getting a loan from a bank or credit union, these kinds of services do not have to follow the same rules and regulations that help consumers make decisions that work for them.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can ensure that welfare levels match the actual cost of living and looking for work. Importantly, we also need to make sure they never fall below the level where a person reliant on them can live with dignity.*

AS A NATION *we can also regulate the short-term credit industry and increase protections against predatory lending practices.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can recognise that hard times can come to anyone and that no one chooses to find themselves without sufficient income. We can fight against the stigma of seeking help by accessing and promoting services like financial counselling and emergency relief services.*

Everyone is included

At The Salvation Army we believe that every individual is created in the image of God. We are all, inherently and irrevocably, created equal. Unfortunately, the systems and structures around us do not always treat us as though we are equal.

Activities like having paid employment, volunteering and being involved in community organisations can help safeguard us against social disconnection and loneliness.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Salvation Army acknowledges that social connection enriches our lives. Activities like having paid employment, volunteering, caring for others, and being involved in community, sporting and spiritual organisations can help safeguard us against social disconnection and loneliness. Social disconnection has been shown to have-long term impacts on both physical and mental health.

Increasingly in Australia we are recognising the importance of mental health in our community. Strong mental health can be complemented by social connection and treatment for mental ill-health can be reinforced by strong community supports.

In fact, the support of the community is crucial in creating resilience in times of loneliness, crisis and hardship. The Salvation Army has seen this through the bushfires, drought and pandemic of 2020 even more than usual.

Not everyone has a strong network of social connection around them. This can be because they don't have the means to join community and sporting groups or maintain personal relationships. It might also be because they don't feel welcome joining groups or because community groups don't make accommodations to allow a broad range of people to join.

Increasingly in Australia we are recognising the importance of mental health in our community.

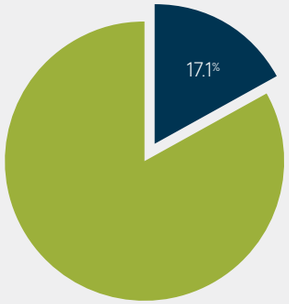
WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can factor social connection into our policy settings. Some places, like the United Kingdom, have loneliness strategies to ensure that the government and community are keeping social connection in mind.*

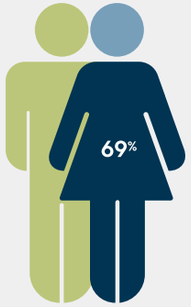
AS A NATION *we can start by ensuring that our welfare system factors in the importance and the cost of social connection in setting the levels of pensions and payments such as the Youth Allowance, the JobSeeker Payment, the Age Pension and the Disability Support Pension.*

AS A COMMUNITY *and as individuals we can ensure that our community organisations are welcoming and safe spaces. Though not all clubs are going to be interesting for everyone, no one should feel unwelcome or be unable to participate in society because of a disability, their age or any part of their identity (for example, gender identity, sexuality or ethnicity).*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can look after our own social connection and look out for the people we care about.*



only around 17.1 per cent of CEOs or heads of business were women



In 2018 the average adult weekly female earnings were 69 per cent of average adult weekly male earnings

GENDER EQUITY

The Salvation Army recognises that although women make up over half the population, they are underrepresented in almost all places of influence.

Of the 227 members of the Australian parliament only 86 identify as women (or 38 per cent). Among the 23 members of the federal cabinet (where the most critical decisions are made) only 6 are women (or about one in five). Outside the public sector the ratios are even more skewed. In 2019 the Workplace Gender Equality Agency reported that only around 17.1 per cent of CEOs or heads of business were women.[10]

Across all positions, women are paid less than men. There are different ways to measure the gender pay gap and all of them point to working men being paid more than working women. In 2018 the average adult weekly female earnings were 69 per cent of average adult weekly male earnings.[11]

In addition, women are disproportionately more likely to be doing unpaid work in the home. The 'typical' Australian man spends fewer than five hours a week doing housework, but the typical Australian woman does between five and 14 hours.[12]

These factors lead to lifelong disadvantage for women. When a woman retires she is likely to have significantly less in superannuation than her male counterpart (in 2017 18, the median superannuation balance for people between 55 and 64 years was $119,000 for women and $183,000 for men.[13]

Women are also significantly more likely to experience family, domestic and sexual violence than men. Some groups of women are at greater risk, particularly Indigenous women, young women, pregnant women, women separating from their partners, women with disability, women on temporary visas and women experiencing financial hardship.[14]

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can actively implement policies that promote women's independence and decision-making both in public and private. For example, some countries have explored ways of encouraging men to increase their use of paternity leave when their child is born – the increased use of paternity leave has seen a more equal division of labour in the home and better outcomes for parents and children.*

AS A NATION, COMMUNITY AND AS INDIVIDUALS *we can challenge language and images that suggest that women are less than men. We can also challenge constructions of masculinity that suggest men are aggressive or dominant and constructions of femininity that suggest women are passive or subordinate.*

Discriminatory systems produce discriminatory outcomes even when the people within the system are actively trying not to discriminate.

THE SALVATION ARMY DOES NOT DISCRIMINATE

When you seek help from The Salvation Army we will treat you with dignity and without discrimination on account of race, culture, ethnic or religious background or on the basis of age, disability, gender, income, sexuality, social status, religious or spiritual belief.

DISCRIMINATION

The Salvation Army is concerned about discrimination where a person or group is treated worse than another because of a characteristic such as their race or gender. Discrimination means that some people are denied opportunities that are available to others because of something that is entirely irrelevant to the opportunity.

In Australia, it is unlawful to discriminate on the basis of age, disability, race, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation in certain areas of public life.[15]

Discrimination can be overt – that is where people openly act or speak in a way that disadvantages a particular group. More often though, discrimination is subtle – like when someone makes a 'joke' at the expense of a group or writes selection criteria that would have the effect of excluding a particular group of people from a particular opportunity.

Discrimination can also be structural. This occurs where the inherent design of a system, or the way a system operates, has the effect of disadvantaging a group of people. Discriminatory systems produce discriminatory outcomes even when the people within the system are actively trying not to discriminate.

A system may be designed in a discriminatory way simply because not everyone who is affected by a decision has been included in making that decision. Sometimes policies are designed without thinking how the policy will affect a particular group. For example, designing a government form that can only be accessed online and only in English will inadvertently exclude those who struggle to use technology because of age or an intellectual disability, those who cannot afford an internet connection due to poverty and it may exclude those with poor literacy or for whom English is an additional language.

Discrimination of any kind has an ongoing, negative effect on many people within our community.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can ensure that as we design, reform or build policies we actively involve people in all aspects of design and implementation who may have previously been excluded. Co-design, collaboration and consultation with the full range of people likely to be affected can help ensure that products and services meet the needs of everyone using them.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can think critically about the systems and structures we use and support. We can question whether there is a structural discrimination that we may not individually see because the system was built with people like us in mind.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can call out and condemn overt discrimination wherever we see it. Discrimination should have no place in our country.*

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

The Salvation Army acknowledges that despite being the first nations of our country, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experience disadvantage disproportionately to other groups in Australia. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are less likely to reach Year 12, less likely to achieve employment outcomes and they have a much lower life expectancy than other Australians.

There are both historical and current contributors to this disadvantage and the experience of colonialism and suppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures has an ongoing negative effect on people from these cultures.

Importantly, much of the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is created by the systems and structures in our society.
For example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately more likely to be incarcerated (taken into custody by police or in prison) than Australians of other races accused of the same crimes. The reason an issue like black deaths in custody is so important to address is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are not more likely to die while in custody, but they are significantly more likely to be in custody in the first place (despite not having a higher likelihood of committing crimes).

Addressing the structural, systemic and historic oppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is critical to addressing the disadvantage currently experienced by people from these cultures.

Much of the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is created by the systems and structures in our society.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can implement the recommendations of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, including enshrining a First Nations voice to parliament in the Australian Constitution and establishing a Makarrata Commission to oversee the process of truth-telling about Australia's history and colonisation.*

AS A COMMUNITY *we can commit ourselves to reconciliation. Many organisations already have reconciliation action plans that set out how they are working toward reconciliation. You can get involved in how your employer, school or community group is supporting reconciliation.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can learn more. We can listen to the stories and experiences of people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and actively learn more about our shared history and the impact of colonialism.*

Equality

means recognising that we all have the same inherent worth and treating everyone equally because we all have equal value.

Social Justice

means recognising that we all have the same inherent worth and that systems and structures create barriers for some people – but it does not have to be that way. Social Justice is about confronting and reforming those systems and structures to remove the barriers that lead to inequality and inequity.

Equity

means recognising that while we all have the same inherent worth, some of us face barriers that others do not, meaning that not everyone gets the same opportunity. Equity requires treating people differently so that they can have equal opportunity.

IN THE SALVATION ARMY WE WORK TO BRING SOCIAL JUSTICE BY:

- Including the excluded;
- Challenging harmful cultural practices;
- Confronting the powerful; and
- Advocating for the oppressed.

Hope for the future

There are some ideas that are quintessentially Australian but none of them quite so much as the idea of the “fair go”.

For The Salvation Army, a fair go means that people have the opportunity to pursue their goals and dreams. It means being able to thrive in all aspects of life – physical, social and spiritual. Having a fair go means that wherever you start, you have a chance to succeed.

There is a lot that needs to be done to ensure that everyone in Australia can have a fair go.

YOUNG PEOPLE

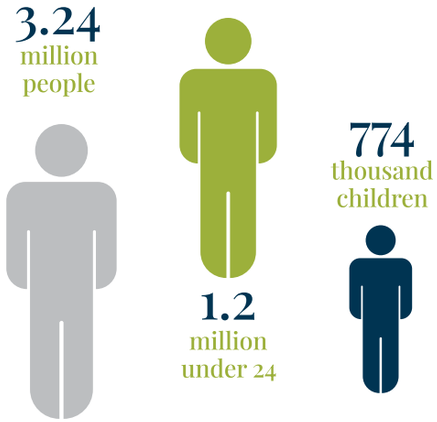
The Salvation Army acknowledges that having a good start to life is often critical to success later down the track. Unfortunately, a lot of children and young people in Australia don't get a great start, usually because of circumstances that are beyond their control such as:

- **Conflict within the family or family breakdown**
- **Sexual, physical and emotional abuse in the home**
- **Rising housing costs and the unaffordability of the rental market**
- **Difficulties in accessing Youth Allowance and other support payments**
- **Lack of support when in, or moving from, state care**
- **Drug and alcohol issues**
- **Mental health issues**
- **Overcrowded living conditions**
- **The death of a parent**

Recent research (before the pandemic) found that of the 3.24 million people living in poverty in Australia, 774,000 are children and a total of 1.2 million are under the age of 24.[16] Children were at higher risk of poverty, with one in six children, and 44.2 per cent of children in sole parent households, living in poverty.[17]

Growing up in poverty can limit children's chances of thriving at school, which in turn affects their potential and limits overall life outcomes, continuing the cycle of disadvantage.[18]

Children who find themselves in out-of-home care (unable to live with their own families and so placed in alternative accommodation) experience additional barriers. Up to 40 per cent of clients attending The Salvation Army's youth homelessness services have previously been in out-of-home care and have 'aged out'. This means they had to leave that system when they turn 18. Care-experienced young people are at very high risk of homelessness and other forms of disadvantage. Independent research shows that for every dollar invested in extending foster care to 21 years, society benefits by more than two dollars in reduced crime, health care, homelessness and increased further education and employment for foster children.[19]



Of the 3.24 million people living in poverty in Australia, 774,000 are children and a total of 1.2 million are under the age of 24

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can make sure that income support levels are sufficient that a family reliant on the JobSeeker Payment and related payments can raise their children without falling into poverty. As a nation we can also ensure that Youth Allowance is high enough that a young person can live with dignity.*

AS A NATION *we can reconsider out-of-home care systems, particularly in relation to the age at which a young person is expected to be independent, to ensure they are meeting the needs of children and young people and setting them up with fair opportunities.*

AS INDIVIDUALS *we can make sure that we do not discriminate against young people on the basis of either their age or their start in life.*

During the pandemic, as many as one in seven children had no access to a stable internet connection.

Australia has a wonderful education system but it does not always have the resources to meet the needs of children and young people experiencing disadvantage.

EDUCATION

The Salvation Army acknowledges that education is a powerful way to address disadvantage and ensure that disadvantage experienced in one generation is not entrenched for the next. Australia has a wonderful education system but it does not always have the resources to meet the needs of children and young people experiencing disadvantage. The movement to online schooling in some areas as a result of the pandemic has shone a spotlight on how the home environment impacts the learning experience of students.

There is an increasing expectation for children to have access to the internet to complete at-home tasks. During the pandemic, as many as one in seven children had no access to a stable internet connection.[20] For students already experiencing financial disadvantage, poor internet access was compounded by the need for each child to have access to a computer or other device to use for online schooling.

The Salvation Army has seen during the disruption of the pandemic, some disadvantaged young people who were not living at home because their home situation was unstable or unsafe had to move back home. The risk of the pandemic had to be balanced against the risk of going home. Despite the best efforts of the education system, engagement with this group of students has been extremely difficult. This disruption may mean that these young people will not only fall behind academically, they may not successfully re-engage with education even after the pandemic has ended.

Even without the pandemic, some young people need a more individualised learning environment than mainstream schools can provide in order to thrive. Specialist schools that focus on supporting young people experiencing, or at risk of, disadvantage and homelessness can help build and foster lifelong learning and resilience as well as forge pathways towards independence. At the specialist schools The Salvation Army provides, students experience a holistic approach to learning that is innovative, engaging and tailored to their individual needs.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

AS A NATION *we can ensure that our education systems (mainstream and specialised) have the resources and funding needed to provide an education experience that meets the needs of all students, especially those who experience other disadvantages.*

AS A NATION *we can also ensure that income support systems factor in the need for a stable internet connection and access to technology in order to participate in education.*

Building a better Australia

Sometimes it feels overwhelming to think about addressing disadvantage and injustice in Australia but actually there are some concrete steps we can take together:

THE SALVATION ARMY BELIEVES THAT AS A NATION WE CAN:

Ensure that our welfare system meets the needs of people reliant upon it and provides enough to live with dignity, meet basic needs and allows families to raise their children.

Invest in housing, especially social housing, so that everyone who needs a home can access one.

Ensure that victim-survivors of family violence receive support and assistance in a way that meets their individual needs and situation.

Hold perpetrators of family violence accountable and make it clear family violence has no place in Australia.

Provide greater financial information and counselling and regulate against predatory lending practices that affect vulnerable Australians.

Factor the importance of social connection into all our policy settings.

Actively implement policies that promote women's independence and decision-making both in public and private.

Proactively involve the full range of people likely to be affected by a policy or program when the policy is being designed, implemented and reviewed.

Implement the recommendations of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Reconsider policies that impact on children and young people, especially out-of-home care systems, to ensure they are meeting the needs of children and young people and setting them up with fair opportunities.

Ensure that our education systems (mainstream and specialised) have the resources and funding needed to provide an education experience that meets the needs of all students, especially those who experience other disadvantages.

THE SALVATION ARMY BELIEVES THAT AS A COMMUNITY WE CAN:

Recognise that all people have inherent value and equality.

Challenge language or structures that diminish our equality such as language that minimises violence against women or tacitly supports discrimination.

Ensure our community organisations are welcoming and safe spaces.

Commit to reconciliation with First Nations people.

THE SALVATION ARMY BELIEVES THAT AS INDIVIDUALS WE CAN:

Think critically about the systems and structures we use and support. We can question whether there is a structural discrimination that we may not individually see because the system was built with people like us in mind.

Acknowledge homelessness as a major issue and treat people who find themselves homeless with dignity and respect.

Be careful how we speak about family violence and call out people and organisations that use language that minimises or seeks to excuse violence against women.

Listen to the stories and experiences of people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and actively learn more about our shared history and the impact of colonialism.

Look after our own social connection and look out for the people we care about.

Make sure that we do not discriminate.

The Salvation Army invites you to join us on our journey on the Pathway to Social Justice.

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