



MEDIA RELEASE

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NINE AND 2GB PRESENTER DEBORAH KNIGHT TO HOST NSW VINNIES COMMUNITY SLEEPOUT

Virtual sleepout to support locals facing homelessness and disadvantage

Locals will support locals doing it tough as part of the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout taking place on Friday 23 October.

Vinnies NSW announced today that the Community Sleepout virtual event will be hosted by Nine and 2GB personality Deborah Knight. The virtual event will link all participants across the 12 state-wide locations. The NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout is set to raise funds and awareness for homelessness and disadvantage occurring in communities throughout the state.

Participants in the Sleepout will nominate to sleep out in cars, couches and backyards, while tuning into the online live-stream hosted by Deborah. The live-stream will give an insight into the harsh reality faced by people living without a secure place to call home.

All funds raised will go directly to local Vinnies services and programs which provide support for people experiencing hardship with food, financial aid, crisis accommodation and other assistance.

“More than ever, people who are doing it tough need support,” said Ms Knight, who previously co-hosted the 2019 Vinnies CEO Sleepout in Sydney. “Vinnies does amazing work as a volunteer-driven organisation helping people in communities throughout the state.

“What defines the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout is that all the funds raised go right back into the local community. It’s all about locals helping locals, and right now when things are tough and uncertain it’s important that we all look after one another.”

In 2020 the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout will expand to 12 locations after close to 300 people raised just under \$160,000 in Deniliquin, Maitland, Tweed Heads, Wagga Wagga and Western Sydney last year.

“We’re thrilled to have Deborah join us to host the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout,” said Vinnies NSW CEO, Jack de Groot, “Deborah has been a fantastic supporter of Vinnies and the work that we do, and her commitment to raising much-needed funds to support the disadvantaged is greatly appreciated.”

Mr de Groot highlighted the timely nature of the event with Vinnies expecting an increase in calls for assistance ahead of cuts to the coronavirus supplements of JobKeeper and JobSeeker later this month.

“There are a lot of people who have been able to restore dignity to their lives as a result of the increased rate of JobSeeker,” said Mr de Groot.



“We anticipate many people will turn to Vinnies when the JobSeeker supplement is reduced by \$300 per fortnight, which is why it is so important that people take part in the NSW Vinnies Community Sleepout to ensure we are able to offer help when it’s needed most.

“I encourage everyone to sleep out in their cars, couches or backyards for a night that will make a real difference to the lives of people doing it tough in communities across the state.”

Currently more than 116,000 people in Australia go to bed each night without a safe and secure place to live. NSW accounts for over a third of the national total with well over 37,000 people experiencing homelessness.

NSW Vinnies Community Sleepouts will be held in Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Broken Hill, Central Coast, Deniliquin, Fred’s Place – Tweed Heads, Maitland, Murrumbidgee, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga and Western Sydney.

People can register to take part and donate at www.vinnies.org.au/communitysleepout

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Interviews with Deborah Knight, Nine Entertainment, and Jack de Groot, Vinnies NSW CEO, are available upon request.

Media Contact: media.nsw@vinnies.org.au / 0417 446 430