



MISSION
AUSTRALIA

Home at last

Being homeless with four children under 10 was never the life Judy pictured for herself, but it became her reality after fleeing from her violent partner

Judy* packed the car and moved with her children to another town. They found a house to rent that was close to some relatives. After living in fear for so long, finally they could all breathe.

But it didn't last long.

A serious mould issue in the house forced the family to move out. With nowhere else to go, Judy's worst fears were realised – her family was homeless.

After reaching out to Mission Australia she found short-term accommodation in a women's refuge, but this was still far from the security Judy wanted for her children. Feeling down and discouraged, Judy developed anxiety and her mental health declined. Thankfully, through Mission Australia she was able to receive support to help her cope with her situation.

Determined to give her children safety and stability, Judy continued to search for somewhere to live but was unable to find anything affordable. Support workers gave

her the help she needed, and the family was soon approved for priority public housing.

Judy also completed budgeting and tenancy preparation programs at the refuge to give her family the best chance of success in the future.

Thanks to the generous support of people like you, things are looking up for Judy and her children.

The family have been in their new home for 12 months now. Judy is working at a local preschool, and her two older children are thriving at school with the confidence that comes from having a stable living situation

Despite all that they have been through, Judy smiles when she thinks about the future, knowing that her family has a safe place to call home.

Working together to end homelessness

Ending homelessness requires us to address the disturbing issue of domestic and family violence, says Head of Policy and Advocacy Jacquelin Plummer

With domestic and family violence at crisis levels across the country, it's possible that you know of someone who has experienced this trauma personally.

I certainly know a few women who have had to leave violent situations and find somewhere safe to live – sometimes with small children in tow.

Through my research at Mission Australia on ways to end homelessness, it has become clear that prevention is key.

Sadly, domestic and family violence is one of the major reasons that women and children in Australia leave their homes and end up experiencing homelessness. It is devastating that women are often in a

position where leaving home is the safer option.

To have any chance of ending homelessness, we must work together to both prevent and address domestic and family violence and any resulting homelessness. You can read more about our findings on this issue on the next page.

As you read through the rest of this newsletter, I hope you're inspired by the stories of people who have overcome difficult times. The resilience of domestic and family violence survivors certainly inspired me as I researched and wrote this paper.

Thank you for continuing to stand with those on their journey to independence.

J Plummer

Jacquelin Plummer
Head of Policy
and Advocacy



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Winter reflection

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

- Romans 8:18

Winter speaks of bare trees in snow-covered landscapes, bright lights, and warm hearth fires. Or respite from the searing sun where shorter days bring comforting cooler nights.

Yet for at risk children and youth, the unemployed, those experiencing homelessness, the elderly and those with disability, winter often brings desperation and despair.

As I reflect on all the ways Mission Australia will touch the lives of our most fragile this winter, I am grateful for the aid you provide and the hope you bring.

Through integrity of heart and respect for everyone, the goodness of your compassion gives Australia's vulnerable strength to persevere.

This season I celebrate with you the hope that their rains will stop and their winters will pass – that their dreams will blossom with the life song you bring.

Jenny Berry
Chaplain Tasmania



Purpose Inspired by Jesus Christ, Mission Australia exists to meet human need and to spread the knowledge of the love of God.

Values Compassion • Integrity • Respect • Perseverance • Celebration

Out of the Shadows

SPECIAL
REPORT

Domestic and family violence: a leading cause of homelessness in Australia

No one should be forced to stay in a violent home to keep a roof over their child's head. Our new report, *Out of the Shadows*, explores the shocking reality that domestic and family violence is a leading cause of homelessness in Australia.

Our research reveals that domestic and family violence is disturbingly common, with 16% of women (1.5 million) and 5.9% of men (528,800) experiencing violence from a partner since they were 15.¹

We also know that more than 121,000 people who were experiencing domestic and family violence sought help from a specialist homelessness service in 2017-18.² And it's a number that's on the rise.

Mission Australia believes the availability of appropriate and affordable accommodation is a key part of the solution. Emergency accommodation is needed to provide immediate safety to people in need. Beyond this, it's vital that victim-survivors have access to permanent homes to ensure they have long-term housing security.

The best way of preventing homelessness caused by domestic and family violence is to stop the violence from occurring in the first place and intervene early when it does.

As an organisation, we continue to add to the many voices calling for more universal prevention, better responses to violence and a national strategy to end homelessness.

"Everyone has the right to a safe and secure home," our CEO James Toomey said. "We need to make the tough but essential changes needed to ensure there are a range of housing options including social and affordable homes, provide coordinated responses, improve economic security and redress gender imbalances."

Read the full report on our website:
missionaustralia.com.au/dfv

Prevalence of domestic & family violence:

More than

3 OUT OF **4** 

of the people who sought Specialist Homelessness Services and reported experiencing domestic and family violence, were female¹

Of the people we helped last year:

8.6% 

disclosed experiencing domestic and family violence²

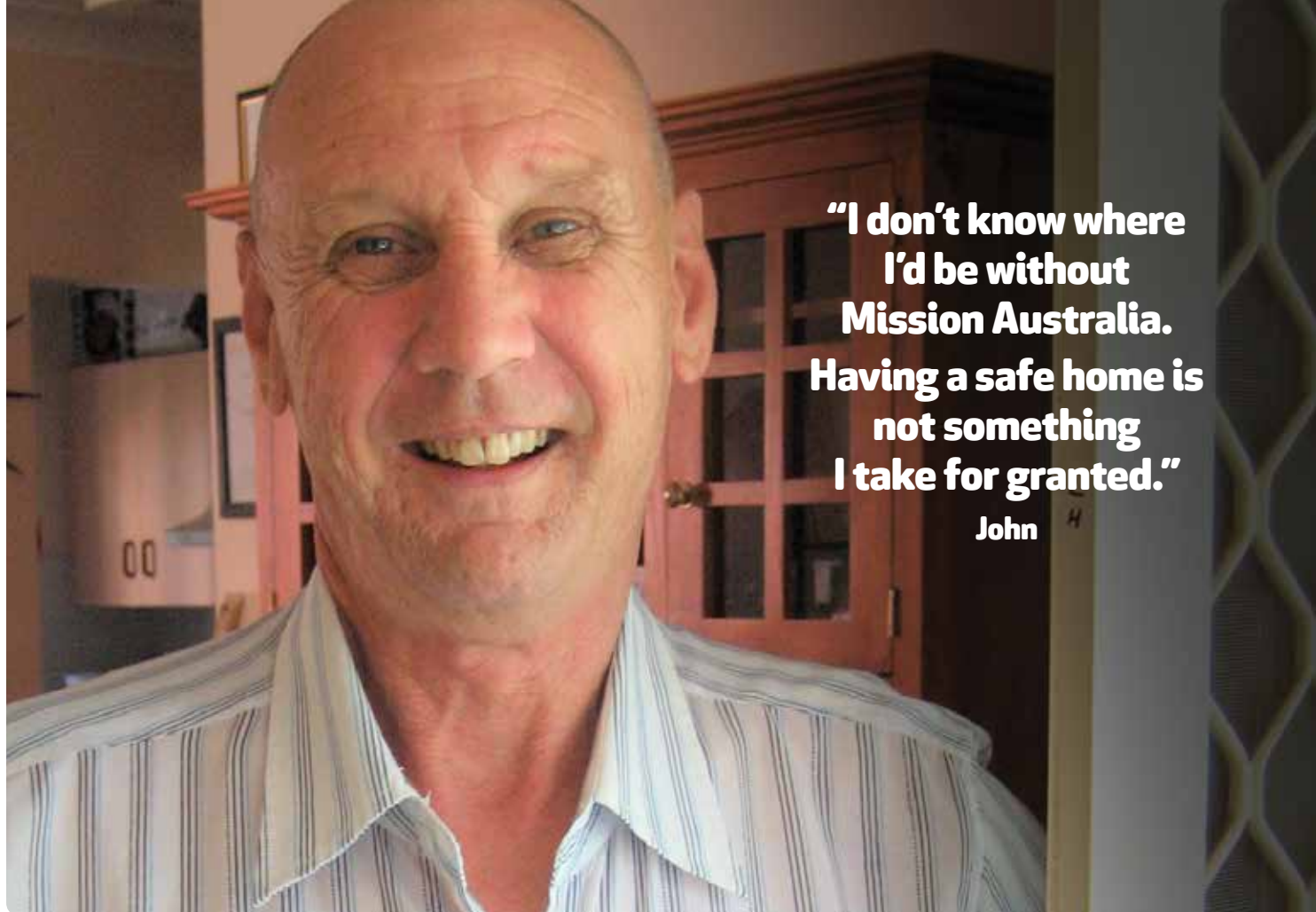
6.1% 

were suspected of experiencing domestic and family violence²

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017), Personal safety, Australia, 2016, cat. no. 4906.0

² Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018), Specialist Homelessness Services annual report 2017-18





**"I don't know where
I'd be without
Mission Australia.
Having a safe home is
not something
I take for granted."**
John

Paying it forward

Three times every week, John takes the train to the city to talk to people experiencing homelessness

John knows what it feels like to be in their shoes. Around 25 years ago, he spent 12 months homeless, sleeping on the streets of Sydney.

One day, he was standing on a street corner and he noticed one of his relatives; but she didn't recognise him. He was too embarrassed to say anything. He was thin and frail, just surviving on eating food scraps.

For John, his lifeline was the Mission Australia Centre in Surry Hills, then known as Sydney City Mission's Campbell House.

There he received the support he needed to get off the streets and pursue a life of independence.

Today, he tries to give back in every way he can, and has even included Mission Australia in his Will to continue helping people after he's gone.

John knows that homelessness can be a very lonely and isolating experience, but says that stopping to have a simple conversation with someone can be the high point of their day.

"Talk to them like you'd talk to anyone else," says John. "Treat them with respect, have the right attitude, talk to them nicely. That's how I do it.

"I can't help with practical things, but I can have a chat. And I always pray for them."



Sarah and Christine

**For more information or to receive a free
Gifts in Wills booklet please contact our team,
Sarah Lendich or Christine Thomas on 02 9307 0111
missionaustralia.com.au/mywill**

Transient treasure

Darren is an award-winning Sydney artist, but probably not one you've heard of before

One of Darren's favourite works is an installation he named Transient Treasures, which featured a series of photographs of ancient archaeological items.

The understated installation is deeply symbolic for Darren, who spent two and a half years homeless.

"It was all about that transient space," Darren explains. "In the same way that I was precious and useful and then found myself transient on the street, I found these things that were made and treasured once, but had been lost and found themselves in between, transient."

One of the photographed items holds extra significance. Not only did Darren find this Aboriginal stone tool himself while he was homeless, but it also proved the catalyst for him turning his life around.

It took Darren just 48 hours to detox from the drugs he was addicted to on the street. Darren lived with Mission Australia for two years and received the holistic support he needed along the way. He recently obtained a private rental and now lives independently.

He is now completing a double degree in Arts and Archaeology at the University of Sydney.

"I feel like I'm getting there," Darren said. "It's been a wonderful journey, and I'll forever sing the praises of Mission Australia."



A selection of Darren's recent artworks





Thank you from Alexei

Thank you so much for the time you took to respond to our Easter Appeal and send Alexei a note of encouragement!

We have compiled your messages into a book with many touches of yellow – Alexei's favourite colour. He has loved receiving your kind words and looks forward to many happy days of gardening ahead with his friends at Benjamin Short Grove.

Brewing for a brighter future

By the time Jack* turned 15, he'd been tormented so relentlessly by bullies that he locked himself in his room and swore he'd never come out. For two years he didn't leave the house.

Desperate for help, Jack's mum called David, the youth educator at Mission Australia's Café One in Darwin. Café One helps young people who are disengaged from education and employment by teaching them life skills and professional skills.

Over time, David was able to convince Jack to give the program a go.

One day, those in the program who had experienced bullying were asked to raise their hands. When he saw every hand raised, Jack realised he wasn't alone for the first time in years.

Jack has now gained new friends and new skills.

"Without Café One I really believe that Jack would still be in his room – or not with us at all," David said. "He had absolutely no idea that there could be something out there that is good."

