

Media Release

UnitingCare and Target Christmas Appeal 2015

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Partnering together since 1992

Friday 30 October 2015

Australians urged to turn \$1 dollar into a million this Christmas

At Christmas time locals in need turn to UnitingCare to help put food on the table, to buy gifts for their children, for temporary accommodation and to help meet the rising cost of living. Your small change can make a big difference through the UnitingCare and Target Christmas Appeal.

This year marks the 24th year Target and UnitingCare have partnered to brighten the lives of thousands of Australian families and they are calling on Australians to rally together and help those most in need.

Traditionally the appeal has focused on the collection of gifts, which will continue this year, however with the generosity of Target customers it is hoped to raise \$1 million dollars this year to provide emergency relief. This will assist thousands of families who struggle to celebrate Christmas, something so many of us take for granted. A gold coin or two can dramatically change the lives of people who are desperately in need of assistance.

This year Christmas will be tough for many Australians with one in six children living in poverty*. Last year the appeal helped support over 42,000 Australian families. This year organisers anticipate reaching even more; people who simply won't have a Christmas without support from organisations like UnitingCare.

"This year has been a really tough year in our community. We have seen people finding it hard to make ends meet and thankfully through this appeal we can help give them some relief," Sue Ash AO, Chief Executive Officer of UnitingCare West said.

"Fortunately we have so many generous members of the community and we are relying on them to dig deep, show compassion and support our appeal at Target Carousel. We're committed to making sure all gifts go to local families."

In addition to collecting from 20 Target stores throughout WA, UnitingCare West will also be collecting gifts from 13 Target stores in the metro area, with donations received going directly to clients in our programs.

In 2014, UnitingCare West was able to meet all of the requests we received for gifts and food assistance. Gifts were delivered to over 768 children and over 485 food hampers were distributed to families and individuals. We hope to be able to meet the need in the community again this year.

The UnitingCare and Target Christmas appeal launches in all Target stores across the country on November 3 and runs through until Christmas Eve, December 24. Shoppers are encouraged to drop off unwrapped gifts at the layby counter in any Target store or purchase a \$1 bauble gift tag at the checkout. Target will donate \$1 from the sale of every bauble to the UnitingCare Christmas Appeal.

Target Managing Director Stuart Machin said the appeal is committed to ensuring no child misses out on the joy of opening a Christmas present.

"We are proud to continue our long tradition of partnering with UnitingCare who provide vital services assisting Australians in need," said Stuart Machin, Target Managing Director.

"We are confident that through the generosity of Australians our goal can be reached to help the local families that are doing it tough this Christmas."

"We encourage everyone to help brighten someone's Christmas this year by donating generously at your local Target store."

UnitingCare staff and volunteers collect the gifts, receive donations and ensure they are both distributed to those most in need in time for Christmas morning.

* Figures derived from ACOSS Poverty in Australia Report 2014

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