

Poverty



Poverty impacts people of all ages, regardless of ethnicity, background, religion or creed.

Almost two million Australians – one in 10 of us – live in poverty. Those most at risk of living in poverty include:

- 58% of Indigenous people
- 28% of jobless people
- 28% of people renting
- 22% of single parents
- 7% of older people.

Some 20% of the nation's population experience poor mental health in some form or another: this is a significant factor in impoverished families' lives. Also, more than half a million Australian children (15%) live in jobless families. Around half of the country's low-income households report cash flow problems; more than a quarter have had to reduce home loan repayments, exhaust savings, increase credit card debt, borrow money from family or friends, or sell assets.

The unemployment rate for young people is significantly higher than the overall rate (14.3%, compared to 4.6% overall) and young people are twice as likely to be under-employed as mature adults, impacting their financial, personal and social development.

The biennial report *Australia's Welfare 2009* states that 'adequate support of families results in 'higher rates of employment and skill levels in mothers, better school performance, decreased welfare dependency, lower rates of criminality within families, reductions in child abuse and neglect, and a decreased need for [community support] services'.

Each day The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory*:

- alleviates poverty for more than 5,000 people, through 300 centres
- advises more than 550 people through financial counselling

Each week The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory:

- provides more than 100,000 meals
- gives out more than 5,000 food vouchers

Each year The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory:

- gives out thousands of blankets
- assists more than 100,000 people through financial crisis relief services

More than one in three people who come to The Salvation Army for emergency relief due to poverty are turned away due to lack of resources. In total, The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory assists more than half a million Australians each year.

Australian statistics are taken from *Australia's Welfare 2009* Biennial Report and the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Salvation Army 09/10 statistics are from The Salvation Army's service and mission information system (SAMIS).

For more information visit salvationarmy.org.au

