

# 12. Facts Charities Need to Know for Winter Giving

The not-for-profit sector knows that winter is more than just chilling for those at risk, who are vulnerable, or experiencing the impact of poverty and financial exclusion. Here are some facts to help you engage your corporate partners around giving this winter.

The cold brings Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs into sharp focus, particularly the most basic needs. At Good2Give we know the compounding impacts of poor health, age, homelessness, fuel poverty, financial exclusion mean that our most vulnerable communities don't just brace themselves for winter. They fear it. And they need community support to get through it.

These facts and figures will help charities registered with Good2Give campaign with their corporate partners on some of the most pressing issues facing our most vulnerable communities in Australia.

## Option 1 Engage companies that build homes

Many perception surveys reveal that the Australian public mostly associates the challenge of winter and the need for shelter with rough sleeping. There's a reason for that – it's the most communicated image associated with the issue at hand.

However for those with a home but still facing disadvantage, the financial hardship shows itself in different ways. It can translate to inadequate means to afford heating among other preventative but costly measures that improve comfort, health and wellbeing in the home. CSR Australia has published an article that references a study undertaken by Professor Adrian Barnett, a researcher based at the Queensland University of Technology. The article highlights this finding from Professor Barnett: 'Australia's death rate due to cold weather, which at 6.5% is almost double that of Sweden's at 3.9%, is almost entirely due to the poor quality to which we build our homes'.

The article, written by CSR's Project Manager - Innovation, Scott Clarkson, states: 'Energy poverty also dictates that poorer people are more vulnerable to these hazards, as heating their largely uninsulated homes becomes more expensive and inefficient while they are forced to make choices that adversely affect their health.

*Constant exposure of a building to low temperatures often results in mould caused by condensation, leading to more frequent illnesses and an increased likelihood of a shorter life expectancy. Staying comfortable is an important part of cardiovascular health and preventing allergies which have a terrible impact on our wellness throughout the nation.*

*As the weather finally cools we should take note of the conditions our aged and frail relatives are faced with each day. It is clear that insulating and efficiently heating a home helps lower blood pressure and reduce risk of life threatening illnesses, and that's not even including the bill shock from your energy company around September'.*

### Top tips

- ✓ This is vital information for organisations providing care and support services to ageing or vulnerable people. It's also an important way the building, engineering, architectural, energy and aged care sectors could work together to support people at risk.

## Option 2 Engage Companies with a Different Narrative on Homelessness

We know a staggering number (more than 15,000 people) sleep rough every night. Initiatives like the Vinnies CEO Sleepout – are compelling ways to start the conversation on this issue.

Some other suggestions include:

- Is there a way to link the story with collaborative partners around the reasons why people become homeless?
- Could you approach your corporate partner to run an appeal that tackles family violence and homelessness, or the affordable housing debate that is currently raging across Australia? Highlight the statistics on the factors leading to homeless including: family violence (25%), financial difficulties (15%), housing crisis/affordability (18%), inadequate or inappropriate dwellings (10%) and relationship or family breakdown (6%).
- Shift perceptions citing the [survey](#) by Relationships Australia, which sought to understand people's attitudes to homelessness and Homelessness Australia's (with a smaller sample of participants) – which reveal that most people think homelessness equals sleeping rough, whereas in reality, severely overcrowded housing followed by supported housing is the experience of most.

### Top tips

- ✓ Work with your company partners and change the story. Campaign to your corporate partners for a strategic approach to solving for specific aspects of homelessness with a long-term commitment.

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## Option 3 Get Hungry to Solve Food Insecurity

In June 2016 the Huffington Post [published this article](#), which highlighted the contents of Australian food relief organisation Foodbank's annual [Hunger Report](#). One in six Australians report having experienced food insecurity (that they didn't have enough food for themselves or their family and could not afford to buy more food) in the past 12 months.

### Top tips

- ✓ Are you able to launch a consumer led appeal with retail outlets focused on food, clothing or health basics. Could you approach FMCG companies, clothing manufacturers and retailers, or the pharmaceutical to run a winter-based campaign?

The report also says that 43,000 people every month are turned away empty handed from food relief charities because of a lack of food and resources and a third of those going without are children.

Without sufficient nourishment, you get ill. Very ill. [You can't concentrate at school](#). Severe hunger impacts your mood and your mental health.

Our blog details ['where your donation is needed this winter'](#) through workplace giving – and highlights the efforts of [OzHarvest](#), led Ronni Kahn, CEO, who points out that “each dollar enables OzHarvest to deliver two meals to people in need.”

The Salvation Army's [2017 Economic and Social Impact Survey](#) revealed that many people seeking our help are living on less than \$18 a day once housing is covered. A workplace giving donation of \$5 will provide a hot meal to someone in need and \$35 will provide pantry basics.

At Good2Give we know that our charities know every bit counts.

Companies and charities can band together on winter appeals to highlight the issues of homelessness, fuel and energy poverty, and food insecurity today and rally Australia's workforce to contribute to warming the winter months for our most disadvantaged communities through workplace giving today.



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