

19 December 2017

Evolve Housing for Youth help young people experiencing homelessness spend Christmas with family or friends.

Evolve Housing for Youth (EHY) will be providing a brighter Christmas for young people experiencing homelessness and housing stress with pre-paid travel cards thanks to a \$5000 grant from Guildford Leagues Club and the Cumberland Council Clubs Grant program, and gift care packs for clients to reduce isolation during the holidays.

Statistics according to Homelessness Australia¹ show that 42% of people experiencing homelessness are under the age of 24 and one in six Australians aged 15-24 are living in poverty, dispelling the myth of a typical person experiencing homelessness being a middle aged or older person.

Andrea Galloway, CEO Evolve Housing said that Christmas time while a joyous occasion for most, can be a lonely and confronting time for young people who are estranged from family or isolated in their community.

“While travel cards may seem like a small gift, for Evolve Housing for Youth clients it can mean the difference between being alone or not during the holiday time. When young people present themselves to our service, they are often already dealing with a range of issues on top of their housing stress, sometimes including mental health, domestic violence or family trauma.

“With limited incomes a travel card is often out of reach for our clients after paying for rent, food and bills. It is very hard to socialise if you can afford the cost of transport and that can make the holidays a very lonely time. By providing travel cards young people can make the choice to connect with family or friends or do a fun activity such as spend the day at the beach during a time that they may have otherwise been alone,” said Ms Galloway.

“Thanks to generous donations from Share the Dignity and Goods 360, over 100 young men and women, and 20 children in Western Sydney will receive gift packs, for some it may be the only joy they receive this Christmas. We know that gifts are not the whole meaning of Christmas but for children and young people who are experiencing isolation and disconnection, a gift is a small way our staff at Evolve can show these young people that someone cares about them. We would especially like to thank Guildford Leagues and the Cumberland Council Clubs Grant program and the generous residents of the area for making these funds available” said Ms Galloway.

The gift packs provide little essentials that many of us take for granted include handbags, electronic goods, toiletries and hygiene items, toys, and nappies for children.

Evolve Housing for Youth is a division of Evolve Housing that provides transitional housing support service for young people aged 16-24 who are able to live in semi-independent housing. Evolve Housing for Youth

¹ Homelessness Australia Statistics from 2011 ABS Census data <https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/about/homelessness-statistics>

supports young people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness; on low incomes; unable to live at home; and young families with accompanying children. In 2016/17 EHY supported 180 clients through case management, living skills training, and transitional housing, advocacy and referral services.

Interviews and photo opportunities available.

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