
BLESSING BAGS NEWS

We have had a very busy August!



MEET OUR MEMBERS: HAYLEY GOULD

Hey! My name is Hayley and I am the Fundraising Coordinator at Blessing Bags. You may also know me as the crazy one at Bagging Days who continuously fails at taking Boomerangs for social media purposes – I think I have finally convinced Chloe (our Marketing Executive) to let me give it another crack.

I joined the team 2 years ago and it was one of the best decisions I have ever made, there's something really exciting about being a part of a passionate and relatively young team who genuinely want to make a difference in our community. I went to high school with Laura (our Founder) who posted about an opening within the team. I had followed Blessing Bags on social media for quite some time and was always in awe of the work they were doing so I reached out and haven't looked back since.



Within my role as Fundraising Coordinator, I am responsible for raising awareness for the issues we support and for facilitating fundraisers so that we can raise money to continue our vital work in providing essential toiletry items to those in need across Melbourne. It's always such a heart-warming experience when a fundraiser comes together, and we can meet the people who continuously provide support to Blessing Bags, both in a financial and non-financial capacity. I know I always say this at every fundraiser, but we literally can't do the work we do without your support and I speak on behalf of the whole team when I say that we are unreservedly grateful for everything you do.

For me personally, Blessing Bags has made such a positive impact in my life because as a team, I feel like we are making a difference to people's lives on a grass roots level and it has taught me that everyone has the capacity to make a positive impact. One of my favourite quotes that has always resonated with me is Ronald Reagan's:

We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.

I feel like the team at Blessing Bags truly values this notion of kindness and as you probably read in our previous newsletter, we have distributed over 7,000 bags since our inception which is pretty amazing. My time at Blessing Bags has been very rewarding and I'm excited for our prospects for growth within the wider community as we continue to develop as a team. I would love to see you at future Bagging Days or fundraisers, please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions or ideas and make sure you come say hi if you attend a future event.

ORGANISATION UPDATE

Sleep in your car

On August the 4th some of our team members gathered at Mornington Park, with likeminded people and spent the night sleeping in their car. Sleep in Your Car 2018 is an annual fundraiser run by the NGO Fusion to raise money for youth experience homelessness. On the 4th of August we gathered as a community to say no. No, It's not ok for a young person to be living without people that are there to help and support them on a daily basis. Together we explored that home is not just four walls and a roof. It's the support, connection and shared hope people have access to everyday. This fundraiser was a great success for both fusion and for the local community to stop homelessness. 160 people volunteered their time to ensure the night ran smoothly, 11 local services educated our community and 105 locals slept in their car. The fundraising target of \$35,000 was reached.

Bagging Up Day

Our next bagging up day is on Monday the 27th of August at 10am. Our bagging up days go for about two hours and involve putting together our blessing bags with the essential items such as deodorant, toothpaste and shampoo. It is also a great chance to meet the faces behind the scenes of Blessing Bags. A lot of us try and make it to as many of these as we can!

If you can't make it there is many other ways you can help us out such as writing up some notes of hope or picking up some donations.

If you do collect donations, we have a range of drop off points including: Frankston, Cranbourne and Mornington Westpac, Donovan' Real Estate Carrum Downs, Sonya Kilkenny's office Carrum, Nu Shooz Rosebud, The Artful collective Dromana, F45 Hawthorn and The Nook Café Shop Maribyrnong.



IN THE NEWS: AUGUST 2018

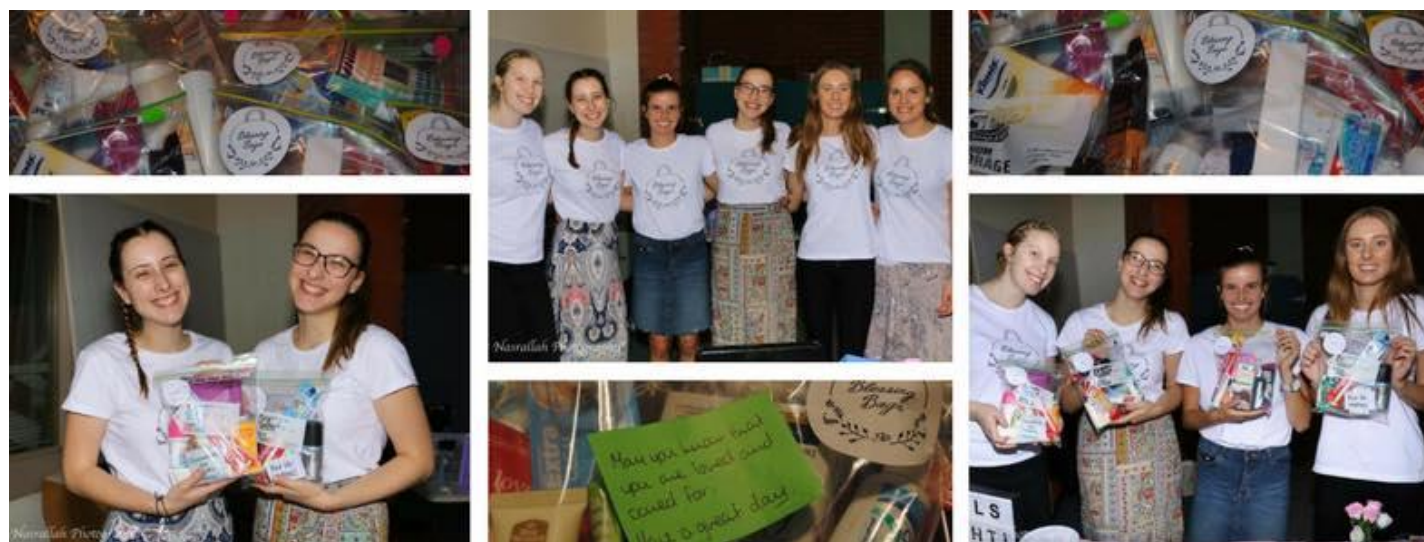
This month, organisations and communities all over the country participated in Homelessness Week, raising awareness of harsh realities for people experiencing homelessness. Staying true to the theme of 'Ending homelessness together', multiple organisations, communities and individuals did their bit to contribute to the success of the week.

The overarching goal of the week was to encourage the community to become more active. NGO [Melbourne City Mission](#) used the week to call on the state government to:

- *Amend the Residential Tenancies Act* so that tenants at risk of homelessness have more protections.
- *Extend the 'leaving care age' from 18 to 21 years old.* This would allow young people to access care and support for longer if needed.
- Give local communities the opportunity to *co-design local solutions to the issues that underline homelessness.*

Despite the week being over, the activism doesn't stop there. [Everybody's home](#) is a campaign to mend Australia's broken housing system. The organisation is calling on the government to address the growing housing prices that are locking out a generation from home ownership, and increasing the amount of people renting. Repercussions to this broken system are also felt in the provision of social housing. As referenced in our [latest article](#), this broken housing system is putting more pressure on affordable and public housing, with the waiting list soaring over 80,000 people.

The good work of these organisations is only achieved accompanied with the support of a vocal and active community. Events like Homelessness week are a great way of amplifying voices that need support to be heard.



A team of three volunteers produces this newsletter: Hayley Gould, Kelsey Walton and Christine Semerdjian.