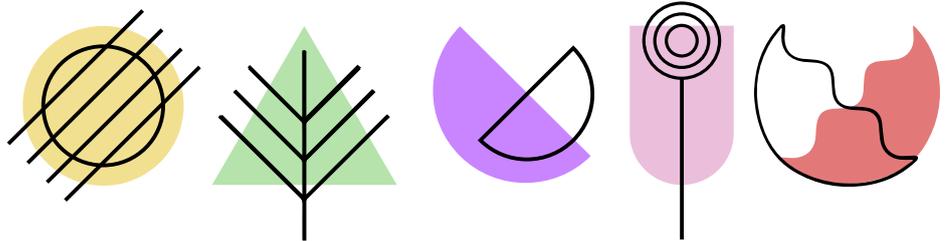


National Homeless Collective

Annual Report 2016/2017



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Our Story

Donna Stolzenberg is the founder and director of **National Homeless Collective (NHC)**; a dynamic, not-for-profit organisation that oversees the operations of **Melbourne Period Project, The School Project, The Plate-Up Project, Secret Women's Business, and Blanket Melbourne.**

“People experiencing homelessness deserve the same respect that we give to our families and friends.”

–Donna Stolzenberg, Director

Beginning in 2015, what set **NHC** apart from many similar organisations was Donna's lived-experience with overcoming hardship and disadvantage through homelessness.

Donna is the mother of five sons, and derives her inspiration from her youngest, who lives with autism. Donna's cultural background as a member of the Ngajtumay and Mirning people connects her to the systematic issues encountered by Indigenous Australians, who are sadly over represented in homelessness statistics.

She has had extensive experience assisting people with complex and multi-faceted barriers to employment.

Through her work with the Australian federal government, she coordinated programs which assisted long-term unemployed people to successfully re-enter the workforce.

Despite all of this, Donna still provides her time on a volunteer basis; directing all funding into the charities, which are all completely donations run.

NHC have a proven track record of;

- Financial and organisational accountability
- Delivering on our projects
- Working collaboratively with existing organisations, businesses, individuals, and groups
- Upholding and promoting our core values
- Working in the best interest of the community
- Working in the best interest of the people we assist
- Reducing stigma and promoting equality
- Educating people about the realities of people experiencing homelessness.





Mission Statement

Mission

NHC is a leading charity responding to the complex needs of people experiencing homelessness and associated causes for homelessness, such as family violence, domestic abuse and housing unaffordability.

Vision

We see an Australia where everyone has the opportunity to be safely housed, have access to essential hygiene and living items, as well as avenues for assistance in times of need.

We are an organisation that;

- Acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land.
- Seeks to empower women, especially those escaping violent and abusive situations.
- Seeks to support all people experiencing homelessness and housing uncertainty, including children and the elderly.
- Supports the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Provides immediate, short, medium, and long-term solutions to complex issues arising from homelessness including employment and sustainable pathways to housing.
- Provides immediate, short, medium, and long-term solutions to complex issues arising from domestic violence and abuse, including connection to crisis accommodation numbers and services.

The core goals of NHC are to ensure those who access our services are provided with understanding, appropriate support and essential items they need to restore their feelings of personal wellbeing, dignity and everyday health and hygiene.





Founder Letter

The last year has seen us take the biggest steps forward with the National Homeless Collective!

Not only have we expanded the number of projects we now undertake, but we've also extended the reach of **Period Project** so we now cover Brisbane, Sydney, Darwin, Gippsland, Geelong and the Murray Region.

By teaming up with our friends at Essential Items SA, we were able to create **Secret Women's Business**, which provides culturally appropriate menstruation items to First Nation's Women across Australia.

Melbourne Period Project also received a sustainable \$47,000 grant from the Bank of Melbourne which bought us a new van to be able to better deliver our Period Packs and other essential items to people who need them most.

We were thrilled to continue to have community support and generous donations for our 2016 Christmas Backpack Appeal, which gifted 200 people experiencing homelessness with everything they need to get through the holiday season.

Our second **The School Project's** Kids in Crisis Easter Fundraiser also exceeded expectations and helped us donate Easter chocolates and brand-new winter pyjamas to over one hundred and thirty children who needed them most.

In July 2017, we launched **Plate-Up Project** with the incredible support of our community fundraiser and the support of our partners at Launch Housing.

As a 100% donations run charity, grassroots community events are the lifeblood that sustain our organisation. Through the year I have attended dozens of local fundraisers, spoken at many primary and high schools, as well as appeared at an incredible amount of panels and events.

Honestly, without these fundraisers and events, we could not continue our work and create projects that assist people experiencing homelessness and women escaping domestic violence situations.

I have created specific homeless awareness sessions that highlight and dispel the myths associated with homelessness and domestic abuse. I have delivered dozens of these sessions to schools, workplaces and organisations across Victoria.

I also want to thank every school, workplace, and organisation that visited our warehouse to assist with creating our **Period Packs!** Thanks to you all we were able to make and distribute over 10,000 individual packs via our street walks, direct drop-offs, and partner agencies.

Just two years ago I was making those same packs in my garage and now **Period Project** helps thousands and women and transmen across Australia to manage their menstruation when they're sleeping rough or experiencing homelessness.

Our charity is all volunteer people power so to everyone who came to an event or a fundraiser **THANK YOU!** To all of the organisations, schools, and workplaces that invited us to share our work and stories with you **THANK YOU!** We love what we do and we can't wait to share our next successes with you.

Sincerely,

Donna Stolzenberg
Founder & Director of National Homeless Collective



Our People



GLENN STOLZENBERG

TREASURER

NEVENA SPIROVSKA

VICE PRESIDENT

SHIRIN WITTS

SECRETARY

DONNA STOLZENBERG

FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

SINEAID HAMMER

BOARD OFFICER

KATRINA HORNE

BOARD OFFICER

We would like to thank all of the volunteers who have helped us over the year.

To every driver who made deliveries, and every person who volunteered their time at an event, or assisted us with packing period packs we acknowledge and sincerely thank you for your efforts.



Our Research

Melbourne Period Project

Everyone who menstruates requires menstrual management; these are the strategies used during the duration of the period to hygienically contain their blood flow, prevent leaking and clothes stains.

Without basic sanitary items to manage menstruation properly, people cannot maintain basic hygiene levels which increases their susceptibility to infections.

The symptoms of menstruation, both before and during, include feeling nauseated, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue, lower back pain, irritability and dysmenorrhea. Without appropriate menstrual management, people experiencing homelessness may feel shame and embarrassed when they stain their clothes or have unpleasant odour on their body. This may exacerbate their menstruation symptoms and diminish their personal feelings of worth.

Risk of infections may increase significantly when people are unable to clean themselves or use unhygienic materials to substitute for sanitary products. Our organisation identified that there was an alarming shortage of menstruation products available to

people experiencing homelessness and housing uncertainty from conversations with homelessness service providers.

Melbourne Period Project was established to fill this gap so that service providers would be able to focus on providing other essential services to people experiencing homelessness. We recognise that many homelessness support services have had difficulty sourcing basic necessities such as sanitary items, sleeping bags, blankets, clothing and school items for children.

Our organisation supplements the work of these support services by directly supplying them with these products, which we assemble in our warehouse as Period Packs.

Each one of our six different Period Pack is designed to address the needs of different types of different people who bleed; from our **Hemlock Pack** for transmen to our **Sunflower Pack** for heavier periods.



Our Projects

Melbourne Period Project

The largest charity of NHC is **Period Project**, which spans across all three states, two territories and several regional hubs across Victoria.

Period Project provides support, menstruation products and essential living items to women and trans men experiencing homelessness and housing uncertainty.

The Period Packs we provide come in six different styles, to cover the various types of homeless periods. In the last financial year, we have given out over 10,000 period packs via our 56 partner agencies and during our street walks.

Period Project operates from a volunteer run warehouse in Port Melbourne, where we also co-ordinate our work-for-dole program for at-risk and long-term unemployed women. The women assist in assembling **MPP's 'period packs'** that are distributed to agencies across Australia.

We have provided education pathways to students by provision of study placement. We have helped them to attain all levels of education – from Certificate IV to Masters Degrees.

In February 2017, **Melbourne Period Project** was awarded a \$47,000 grant from the Bank of Melbourne.

This grant helped us provide more efficient and effective services to all of the people experiencing homelessness we support, and the incredible organisations we work with.

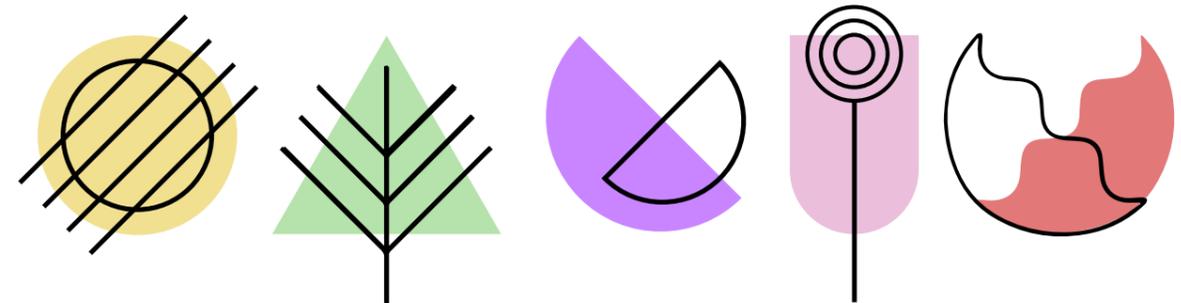
It gave us the ability to buy a van and get everything out to those in need rather than hauling it all in our own cars. We were also able to create an infographic video explainer thanks to Prism Studios which highlights our work while dispelling myths associated with homelessness.

Sydney Period Project

Sydney Period Project was so pleased to link up with National Storage this year. As we grew larger and the amount of product passing through our operation grew bigger, it became clear we would need a sustainable storage solution. National Storage Artamon so kindly donated a garage to us and relieved us of storage worries.

We were also pleased to talk to small magazines to spread the word about the project. Features in 'subvrt' helped us reach a larger audience, particularly younger people, since generally we have quite a lot of older support. Another great thing this year was our engagement with local high schools - many teenagers reached out to us regarding holding donation drives at school. It's wonderful to see all kinds of Sydneysiders rallying together for good.

Karyn Wee, Chapter Manager



Blanket Melbourne

Every winter, **NHC** coordinates **Blanket Melbourne** by collecting and distributing thousands of brand new blankets and sleeping bags to Melbourne's increasingly growing homeless population.

From May to September, we collect hundreds of items and distribute them directly via dozens of homelessness service providers.

Blanket Melbourne was delighted to be chosen as **Meshel Laurie's** charity of the month in July 2017.

The Plate-Up Project

The Plate-Up Project (PuP) is an initiative helping women escaping domestic violence and abuse to rediscover their love of cooking and connection with food, while also getting qualifications and experience that will lead to a solid pathway to employment and financial stability.

Providing skills, qualifications and work experience, exactly when they are most needed.

PuP enables families to get back on their feet sooner - it's a hand up, not a hand out.

Our launch in 2017 was the culmination of months of workshopping and planning and the amazing night reflected the hard work that had been poured into this initiative.

The School Project

The School Project (TSP) was launched in 2016 and addresses the overwhelming and growing shortfalls families with school children face when leaving dangerous domestic violence situations.

We have found that affected families often find themselves living in crisis accommodation, like motels or cars, without access to school items, preventing children from returning to their education.

TSP collects and distributes brand new school equipment, uniforms and essentials to those kids who need it most.

Since January 2017, we have created and distributed over 650 backpacks, 30 play bags, 40 camping packs, 25 swimming packs, and 40 school hats to help kids get back to school.

Secret Women's Business

Secret Women's Business is an indigenous run charity that specifically supports First Nation's women and girls in remote communities in a culturally appropriate manner.

Many First Nations women and girls do not have access to adequate sanitary items due to high costs, unavailability of items, and cultural boundaries. **The Secret Women's Business** chapter is a collaboration between sanitary sisters **Essentials 4 Women SA** and **Essentials for Women of Perth**.

We would like to thank Blackfella Revolution for generously fundraising on our behalf.



Our Thanks

Thank you so, so much to the following organisations for fundraising, donating or supporting National Homeless Collective;



- **Renegade Pub Football League** for having both Melbourne Period Project and The School Project as fundraising partners.
- **The 8%** for covering the cost of our Work For Dole supervisor payments.
- **Lions Club of Point Cook** for fundraising for Plate-Up Project.
- **Nude Dudes Candles** for fundraising for The School Project and Melbourne Period Project.
- **Fictionally Yours** for choosing Melbourne Period Project to be its fundraising partner.
- **Gift Box Organic** for supporting Melbourne Period Project.
- **The Limb Family Foundation** for awarding a grant to Melbourne Period Project.
- **BioMed Melbourne** for choosing Melbourne Period Project as its fundraising partner for the 'Women in Leadership' awards.
- **Priceline** and **Priceline Pharmacy** for donating to Brisbane Period Project.

- **What Froggy Bakes** for fundraising for Melbourne Period Project.
- **St. Joseph's Flexible Learning Centre** for donating stock to Melbourne Period Project.
- **Nude Dudes Candles** for powering our Mother's Day pamper pack drive.
- **Williamstown CYMS Ladies Day** for donating to Melbourne Period Project.
- **Phoenix Leisure Group** for donating brand new BlackWold sleeping bags to Blanket Melbourne.
- **Holden Port Melbourne** for donating items to Melbourne Period Project.
- **StarTrack** for couriering more than 3,000 sanitary items to indigenous women and girls in Croker Island, Northern Territory.
- **TOM Organic** for donating items to Melbourne Period Project for International Women's Day.
- **Croc's Playcentre** for supporting The School Project's Kids in Crisis Easter Fundraiser.
- Hai Trang from **OneLedger Accountants** for donating his account services pro-bono.
- **Lions Club of Quilters Victoria in Ballarat** for fundraising for Melbourne Period Project.
- **David Feeney MP** for Batman for fundraising for Melbourne Period Project on International Women's Day.
- **Bands Night Out** for fundraising for The School Project.
- **Bank of Melbourne** for awarding Melbourne Period Project with a \$47,000 Community Grant.
- **Man With A Van** for transporting The School Project stock to Launch Housing.

- **The Australian Natural Soap Company** for donating over 200 packaged soaps to our Christmas Backpack Appeal.
- **Lush Charity Pots** for donating to Melbourne Period Project.
- **Coles Brunswick** for donating dozens of brand new socks to The School Project.
- **HOMIE** for inviting us to be part of their VIP Days.
- **Libra** for supplying over 26,000 fresh wipes to Melbourne Period Project.
- **Women's Melbourne Network** for hosting a trivia fundraiser for Melbourne Period Project.
- **CRC North Keilor** teachers for donating their time to pack for Melbourne Period Project.
- **Lowther Hall** for fundraising for Melbourne Period Project.
- **Muslim Womens Collective - Sydney University** for donating to Sydney Period Project.
- **Thrasher** skating team for fundraising for Melbourne Period Project.
- **Ironique Hair Studio** for hosting a pamper day for Melbourne Period Project.
- **Geelong Women's Unionist Network Geelong Trades Hall** for donating to Geelong Period Project.
- **Victorian schools** for donating products and fundraising for Melbourne Period Project.
- **Ormond College** for fundraising for and designing a new logo for Melbourne Period Project.



Statistics & Information

Alarming statistics about homelessness in Australia:



There are over **100,000** Australians experiencing homelessness



44% of rough sleepers are women



In the last year, homelessness has increased by **70%** between 2016



This makes up **0.5%** of our total population

Information about homelessness:



39% of people experiencing homelessness live in severely overcrowded houses



20% of people experiencing homelessness live in supported accommodation.



6% of people experiencing homelessness live in improvised housing dwellings



Indigenous Australians are **27%** more likely to experience homelessness than non-Indigenous Australians



Causes of homelessness:



The single biggest factor is extreme financial difficulties arising from unforeseen situations such as medical issues or job loss



Housing affordability and availability, especially with the demand for subsidised and public housing rising outstripping supply



Domestic violence and abuse

Causes of homelessness for women:



Domestic violence and abuse



Financial dominance and control



Isolation from friends and family



Loss of independence

Challenges for women experiencing homelessness:



Increased risk of infections



Increased rates of sexually transmitted infections



Increased rates of assault



Increased mental health issues



Risk of isolation from essential health services

Challenges managing menstruation when experiencing homelessness:



Lack of access to essential menstruation items



Stained clothes



Higher risk of infection if using old clothes to manage bleeding



Exacerbation of menstruation symptoms



Difficulty accessing services during menstruation

Our Future

We're so excited to grow our Projects across Australia to help even more people in need!

Period Project

Period Project will continue to grow across Australia.

We are looking to establish ourselves in Canberra and connect with even more homelessness service agencies to help us distribute our Period Packs.

Plate-Up Project

We're so excited to begin work on the **Plate-Up Project's** specialised curriculum, made for women fleeing domestic violence situations.

We will also be specially training our partner-workplaces to understand the complex needs of women who participate in the **PuP**.

We will be working with Launch Housing to roll out this program in Melbourne, with an aim to have other states adopt this initiative.

Secret Women's Business

Secret Women's Business will continue working with **Essentials 4 Women SA** to deliver as many Period Packs to

First Nation's Women across Australia, who currently have difficulty accessing menstruation items.

The School Project

The School Project will continue its work helping kids fleeing domestic violence situations get back to school.

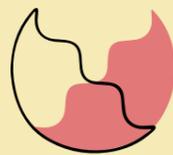
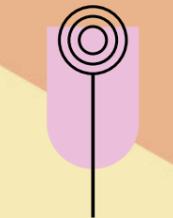
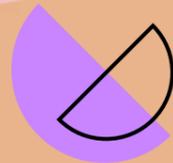
We will be concentrating on working closely with schools in high-risk areas to ensure that we can be available to assist with supplying school camps, swimming classes,

and uniforms to the kids who need them most.

We will also be focusing on rural areas where essential school items are more difficult to access.



How You Can Help



Financial Donations

Please help us sustain our work by making a generous donation.

National Homeless Collective is a Public Benevolent Institution that has DGR Status. All donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

If you need a receipt, please email Glenn@mpp.org.au

National Homeless Collective

BSB: 063-027

ACC: 1011-8955

Commonwealth Bank of Australia

Host a Fundraiser

We are a 100% donations run organisation that is completely sustained by fundraising and grants.

You can host a fundraiser at your school, University or workplace and one of our representatives can attend to collect the funds and speak about our work.

Lunch & Learn Sessions

We highly encourage people to book a 'Lunch & Learn' with us.

We are always delighted to join you at your school, University, organisation or workplace to deliver an interactive and informative session that dispels the myths of homelessness and domestic abuse.

The sessions are empowering and can be catered to all learning levels to ensure they are appropriate.



