



Uniting Virtual Sleepover Homelessness Week

1-9 August 2020

How to host a virtual sleepover.

Thanks for taking part in the Uniting Virtual Sleepover – spending 1 night of virtual homelessness during Homelessness Week, 1-9 August 2020.

Here are a few helpful tips to make sure that your Uniting Virtual Sleepover night is more meaningful for your family and friends.

- **Send invites:** A couple of weeks before the Uniting Virtual Sleepover night, make sure you send your Zoom / HouseParty / Messenger group invites – including meeting IDs, and any other useful information regarding times, activities and other details for everyone to join in.
- **Send information:** While this is a time for us to join together and connect, it is also a learning opportunity for those attending. Below are some ideas to help bring meaning to the Uniting Virtual Sleepover experience and promote understanding and education about homelessness.
- **Overview on Uniting Virtual Sleepover 2020:** Our homes provide shelter and a warm, safe place to sleep. But more than 600 people in and around the Perth CBD don't have this luxury – they sleep rough on the streets every night. And the effects of COVID-19 are only making it worse. Homelessness Week 2020 is a time for us to reflect on the importance of 'home', and what we can do to

help others who aren't so lucky. Can you imagine needing to couch-surf at someone's house or sleep on the street in the cold outdoors? We are asking you to experience this for just one night.

- **About Uniting WA:** At Uniting, we exist to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice. We work to address the causes of vulnerability and disadvantage, and we stand for a just society where individuals and communities are valued and connected. And we act with impact. Uniting is one of three community services organisations of the Uniting Church Western Australia.
- **Uniting to end homelessness:** On any given night, more than 600 people are sleeping rough in and around the Perth CBD. And more than 9,000 people are experiencing homelessness across our state. Uniting is committed to supporting people to exit homelessness.

At our Tranby Engagement Hub, we engage and support people who are in crisis and sleeping rough in and around the City of Perth. We assist adults with essential services such as showers and food and work 1:1 with people to understand their individual needs.



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At Uniting, we support people to access the services that are right for them, and to develop the capacity and skills they need to move from crisis towards secure, long-term accommodation.

- **Choose your level of 'discomfort' for the night:**

- Sleep on the floor – you will realise how hard the ground is
- Sleep on the couch – it will really make you appreciate your bed
- Sleep outside – among the elements, cold, and bugs
- Create a mia-mia – using nature to create a temporary shelter
- Donate to the Uniting Virtual Sleepover
www.unitingwa.org.au/donate

- **Suggested clothing for your Virtual Sleepover:**

Often when people are experiencing homelessness and are rough sleeping, whatever clothes they are wearing are good enough. Staying warm and dry is the main consideration. Also you need to think about bugs especially at night, so long sleeves and long pants are important.

- **Suggested sleeping requirements for your Virtual Sleepover:**

Often it is difficult to maintain possessions and sleeping comforts on the street. When people are experiencing homelessness and are rough sleeping, staying warm and dry is the main consideration. Some of the items that make sleeping on the street slightly easier include

- socks (to keep your toes cosy)
- sleeping bag (to make the ground more bearable)
- beanie (most heat is lost through your head)
- gloves (to keep your fingers warm)
- scarf (a bonus in the cold weather)

- **Suggested food for your Virtual Sleepover:**

Over 4 million Australians have experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months. Hunger refers to a personal, physical sensation of discomfort, whereas food insecurity refers to a lack of available financial resources for food at the household level. The items of food that provide sugar and carbohydrates as well as instant and portable nourishment are important.

- Up N Go
- Muesli, breakfast and protein bars
- Tinned tuna and crackers

- **Suggested viewing for your Virtual Sleepover:**

Perhaps during your Virtual Sleepover watching some educational and engaging programs about homelessness will bring meaning and understanding. Here is a list of recommended viewing *please be aware of the viewer ratings and guidelines, Uniting WA strongly suggests parental supervision when viewing resource material

Viewing List

Imagine Video

UCW 3.15 min and also cut down UCW

24/7 Video : UCW 4.5 min

<https://youtu.be/JOZOA3looiQ>

The Bystander Effect

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/video/2018/dec/30/the-bystander-effect-neuroscientist-shows-how-our-brains-dehumanise-the-homeless-video>

SBS Filthy Rich and Homeless

<https://www.sbs.com.au/learn/filthy-rich-and-homeless>

ABC You Can't Ask That Homeless

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/you-can-t-ask-that/series/2/video/LE1617H012S00>

The Public

2018 Film : An act of civil disobedience turns into a standoff with police when homeless people in Cincinnati take over the public library to seek shelter from the bitter cold. Director/Writer : Emilio Estevez. Stars: Alec Baldwin, Taylor Schilling, Emilio Estevez

The Oasis

A 2008 Australian documentary produced by Shark Island Productions and directed by Ian Darling and Sascha Ettinger Epstein. The film explores the lives of homeless youth living in the Salvos Oasis youth refuge in Sydney.

Shelter WA

Allan's Story <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=405433283399979>



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- **Suggested reading for your Virtual Sleepover:**

- **Lived Experience story of 17 year old Ash:**

Homeless for 2 years

“All my mates would be walking down the street and they’d be like, “I’m going home” and I’d think to myself, “Well, I’m going to walk around for the next 5-6 hours until I catch a bus back to where I’m staying”. It’s embarrassing. I go to school and everyone is so happy and I try to act happy to fit in with the other kids, but really I’m actually miserable. It would be so much easier knowing that I’ve got a place to go home to after school. Everywhere I go its month-in month-out. I spend a month at one place and during that month I spend a lot of time figuring out where I’m going to go or who’s going to help me next. Or, who I’m going to talk to next about it. It’s hard and it’s frustrating. I don’t know whether it makes me more angry or sad. Every time I go look at a place I have to consider my budget, and half the time they won’t accept me because I’m 17. For Centrelink payments, youth allowance as an independent student, I get \$440 [per fortnight], but I have to live my life like an adult. That money needs to pay for rent, food, clothes and necessities, everything I need — deodorant, toothpaste — right down to every little thing, and I’ve got to live off that. And I have to catch buses everywhere and I don’t have anyone to help. A rental can be anywhere between \$150 to \$280, \$350 a week. It makes things really, really hard, because I’m paying my whole pay nearly on rent and then I’ve got to find other ways to survive...”

Reading List

Nyoongar Dictionary

<https://www.noongarculture.org.au/noongar-dictionary-by-rose-whitehurst/>

Why Weren’t We Told?

by Henry Reynolds (white author). The helps to explain why we never heard the true history at school.

Dark Emu

by Bruce Pasco (Yuin man)

The Little Red Yellow Black Book

an introduction to Indigenous Australia, by Bruce Pasco and AITSIS (and previous authors)

Greatest Estate on Earth

by Bill Gammage (white author)

Yorro Yorro,

Aboriginal Creation and the Renewal of Nature by Davis Mowaljarlai and Jutta Mainic

The Colonial Fantasy

Why White Australia Can’t Solve Black Problems, by Sarah Maddison

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/indigenous-international-rights>

Talkin’ Up to the White Woman

Aboriginal women and feminism, Aileen Moreton-Robinson 2000

Rob Riley

An Aboriginal leader’s quest for justice, by Quentin Beresford

Jackson’s Track Memoir of a dreamtime place

by Daryl Tonkin and Carolyn Landon

Decolonising Solidarity

by Clare Land

Other Media

IndigenousX website, and on Twitter.

Koori Mail newspaper

\$100/year for newspaper delivered fortnightly

The Point; TV show, SBS, weekly current affairs

Moorditj Mag radio show. Weekly show on RTR FM (and repeated on Noongar Radio) find it on streaming on RTR FM website.

NITV television station

Noongar Radio 100.9 FM

Speaking Out

podcast on ABC with Larissa Behrendt

- **Suggested Activities**

- **1. Pre-Activity “Myths&Facts”**

– a multiple choice set of quiz questions [following page]



Myths & Facts about Homelessness

What is the number of people experiencing homelessness in Australia according to the 2016 Census?

- a) 97,000
- b) 10,600
- c) 116,000
- d) 213,000

Answer is 116,000 people – a further 97,000 were considered at risk of homelessness which amounts to a total of 213,000 people.

What is the percentage of Aboriginal people in WA that are experiencing homelessness?

- a) 8%
- b) 12%
- c) 21%
- d) 29%

Answer is 29% as opposed to 0.5% for the general population.

In the recent Rental Affordability Study undertaken by Anglicare Australia where affordable rent is determined to be equal to or less than 30% of one's total household income found: For a single person on Newstart Allowance the percentage of properties (7,898 properties surveyed) that were affordable within the Perth Metro area was:

- a) 0%
- b) 2%
- c) 5%
- d) 10%

Answer is 0% percent as the median rent in Perth is \$350pw – no rental property surveyed was affordable.

The average age of mortality for someone experiencing long term homelessness is:

- a) 46 years
- b) 53 years
- c) 61 years
- d) 72 years

Answer 46 years – the average mortality rate is one of the lowest for any population group. Long term homelessness significantly impacts upon the health of an individual.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Only 7% of people who are experiencing homelessness are sleeping on the streets

True - The reality is that a majority of those homeless are families living without a permanent home. These people 'couch surf' with friends, live in overcrowded rooms, move between emergency shelters and hostels, and sleep in cars and make-shift dwellings.

TRUE OR FALSE:

Alcohol and drug abuse is the leading cause of homelessness in Australia

False - Domestic and family violence is the leading driver of homelessness in Australia. More often than not, alcohol and drug use occurs as a result of experiencing homelessness.

IN A CRISIS? IF YOU NEED EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE PLEASE CONTACT:

- Entrypoint Perth - (08) 6496 0001 or 1800 124 684
- Homeless Advisory Service - 1800 065 892
- Crisis Care - (08) 9223 1111 or 1800 199 008
- Lifeline - 13 11 14
- Kids' Helpline - 1800 55 1800



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