

Unite with us in kindness.

It's hard to believe that we're already close to the end of 2021, isn't it? As we speed towards Christmas, I've been reflecting on the year that's been and I am so grateful for many things: people reaching out to show they care, a state full of natural wonder, and freedom of movement to appreciate our community. I continue to be touched, moved and inspired about how Western Australians look for ways to be kind to one another as we continue to navigate a world that has changed so much since March of 2020.

But I also need to admit to an undercurrent of concern. There are many who find this time of year difficult because they are separated from people they care about; Christmas is often a time when we see more and more people experiencing vulnerability. There are many people who live in fear of escalating tensions driven by the pressure to live up to the Christmas dream of plenty. We've all heard the statistics about the increase in family violence over the period of COVID lockdowns across the country, and we know that Christmas is also a peak time as family pressures mount.

I'm really proud that our Uniting Team are here to walk alongside people for whom Christmas is far from joyful. In October, as part of a nationwide consortium of UnitingCare Agencies, Uniting WA was appointed to deliver the Escaping Violence Payment, part of the Federal Government's commitment to supporting victim survivors of family violence. The Escaping Violence Payment is a timely way to support people who have left a violent relationship to remain independent. I'm so pleased we can be a part of making it happen.

I also hope that we'll be able to bring some cheer to families in other ways this Christmas. Last year, as a result of generous donations from our community, Uniting supported over 1,000 families and individuals who were struggling to keep food on the table over the festive period.



This year we've seen an increase in demand in all of our services, and we're expecting to see the trend continue. Families are struggling in the face of lower incomes, leading to food insecurity.

So, I'm asking you to **Unite with us in kindness**. Together we can support children, adults and families in the way they need it most at Christmas.

Your donation to our Christmas Appeal buys grocery gift cards for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness, families and young people, and people needing to use our domestic violence and reintegration services. Every donation makes a big difference. And we want to fulfil every request this Christmas.

Which is why I'm asking you to help if you can. We'd be so pleased if you could donate by returning the donation form in the enclosed envelope or via our website at www.unitingwa.org.au/donate.

I wish you and all your loved ones a joyous Christmas season.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Hunt
Chief Executive Officer

Lived experience: a journey of healing from homelessness.

Uniting WA developed the Beds for Change initiative in partnership with Noongar Mia Mia to provide accommodation and support to people sleeping rough in the greater Perth area during the early response to COVID-19.

The program provided accommodation and support to 126 people. Many long-term rough sleepers achieved ongoing, positive change in their lives due to this program.

Uniting WA participant, Damien, joined the Beds for Change program in 2020 and started his journey of healing from homelessness. He shares his story here:

“I was born in 1979 and grew up in the northern suburbs of Perth.

I was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder when I was 6, but it was probably Post Traumatic Stress Disorder from traumatic events in my childhood.

Growing up in the 80s, you're told not to cry, not to talk about stuff, I just bottled it all up and never got any counselling for it.

My stepdad got tired of disciplining me all the time and eventually, on my 16th birthday, they kicked me out.

My first house lasted for about 6 weeks before I left and went to the streets, and then jail at 18. I got out on my 21st birthday - the first day of the Sydney Olympics.

From there, I spent about 8 years on the streets, but I worked every day on construction sites. I was using a lot of drugs at the time just to feel ordinary and stay awake, stay safe and be able to go to work again the next day.

I got sick of that life eventually, so I went and spoke to Uniting and they organised for me to go to a hostel as part of the Uniting Beds for Change program, which was amazing for me.

After Beds for Change, they got me into the Uniting Homeless Accommodation Support Service (HASS) program. A week later I was in the HASS program and my life has not stopped changing since.”

To read Damien's inspiring story in full, visit the News & Resources page on the [Uniting WA website](#).



Recycle your Christmas containers and support Uniting.

Make your Christmas party more than a social event by recycling your drink containers and donating the proceeds to Uniting WA.

We're a participant in the Containers for Change Scheme, and you can direct the refund from all eligible containers to us by dropping them at a depot and quoting our scheme number: ID C10277586.

Good Sammy has the largest number of collection points. Visit goodsammy.com.au/collection-points to find locations. All donations are greatly appreciated.



Never say die: Jacinta Hampson's story.

Jacinta Hampson lives in a supported accommodation home she shares with other Uniting Participants.

At 18 years' old, Jacinta had just finished her first year of a university degree in Journalism when she had an accident that left her with catastrophic head injuries that doctors warned she would never survive.

But Jacinta fought back. After emerging from a coma and learning how to swallow, eat, walk and talk again, she began the journey to rebuild the rest of her life from the ground up.

Two years after her accident, Jacinta wrote a story about her experience of adjusting to life with disability.

Now 52 years old, Jacinta was supported to publish her story as a blog. Search 'Never say die' to read the blog on the [Uniting WA website](https://www.unitingwa.org.au).



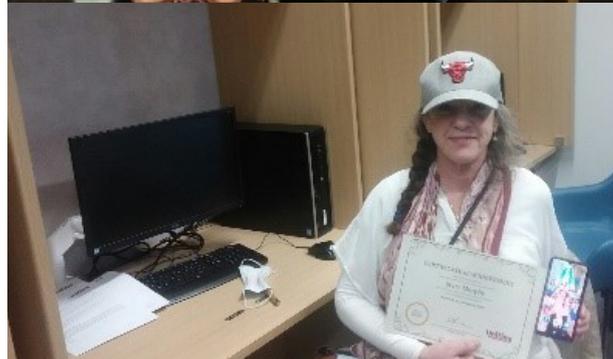
Computer workshop for ILP tenants.

The Housing Team organised workshops for Independent Living Program (ILP) tenants to learn new computer skills.

The workshops were a great success, with 3 sessions held in our new Tranby computer room.

The group focused on computer basics like using the internet, sending emails, formatting documents, as well as a session on using apps on a smartphone.

Luke Firth from Perth Computer Coaching facilitated the workshops, and the tenants loved learning new skills, and the sessions gave them lots of confidence.



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Contact comms@unitingwa.org.au or sign up on our website.

Uniting WA kaadidj Noongar Moort Keyen Kaadak nidja boodja narnga ngaala yangka ngaalang noondakiny maar. Ngaala karnitj-djinang baalabiny kooranyi Midjiyoop boodja kepa. Ngaala maara-baron yira-ak kooralong kalyakool Bardip Yira-Maaman boodjara karroyal ngaala karodjin Koorakor birdiyar, koora, yeyi.

[unitingwa.org.au](https://www.unitingwa.org.au)

Uniting

The difference we make.

We're pleased to share service impact highlights from the past year. To learn more about our services and impact, read the 2020-2021 Annual Report online at unitingwa.org.au.

The Attach program supports parents who are concerned about their drug and alcohol use.

100% of clients rated this service “excellent” and **90%** reported an increase in their wellbeing as a result of the program.



Parenting under Pressure (PuP) is a program for people experiencing issues that may affect their parenting.

100% of clients reported:

- increased knowledge and skills in effective parenting strategies
- using the parenting strategies effectively with their own child/ren
- their child/ren have improved levels of positive behaviour
- that PuP strategies have had a positive impact on their children.

Foster care.

A 3 year-old child who has experienced significant trauma was placed with foster carers. The foster carers were recruited during the 2021 foster carer campaign.

The young boy had travelled from the north of WA and needed to be close to the Perth Children's Hospital for his medical needs. The new foster carers welcomed him into their family unit, which included children aged 4, 6 and 13.

The family are by his side through a series of significant dental procedures, Perth Children's Hospital appointments and also introducing him to community activities. The child is now responding to the therapeutic placement and learning to play, laugh and engage with the carers and their children.

Moorditj Yorga Together Walking.

Moorditji Yorga Together Walking supports Aboriginal women experiencing - or are at risk of - family and domestic violence.

100%

of participants:



would recommend this service to someone facing similar challenges



strongly agree that they felt safer and now have better skills to manage future challenges



agree that their safety concerns and needs were met

