



Vinnies  
Service  
Medallion

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# PROGRAM INFORMATION

## What is the Vinnies Service Medallion (VSM) program?

The Vinnies Service Medallion (VSM) program is an initiative designed by the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW to engage secondary students in social justice issues and community service. The program educates students about key social issues while offering practical volunteering and fundraising opportunities. The VSM program aims to foster a culture of civic responsibility and service, empowering young people as leaders of social change.

## Who is eligible to participate in the VSM program?

The VSM program is aimed at secondary students, ranging from Year 7 to Year 12. Schools that are affiliated with or willing to partner with the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW are eligible to participate. The program is inclusive and strives to be accessible to all interested students.



## How are the different stages of the VSM program structured?

The VSM program is structured into three stages:

### Bronze (Years 7-8)

Focuses on introducing students to poverty and inequality in Year 7 and environmental justice in Year 8. Students engage in related volunteering or fundraising activities.

### Silver (Years 9-10)

This stage offers tailored volunteering and fundraising opportunities, with an opportunity for school input based on community needs.

### Gold (Years 11-12)

This stage aims to further deepen student involvement in social justice initiatives, with school input shaping the program's focus.

## Is there any cost associated with participating in the VSM program?

As an initiative of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW the VSM program is provided free of charge to schools and students. This ensures that all interested students have the opportunity to participate regardless of their financial background.

## What types of volunteering and fundraising opportunities are available in the VSM program?

The VSM program offers a diverse range of volunteering and fundraising opportunities aligned with social justice themes. These opportunities are designed to be meaningful and impactful, directly addressing community needs. Activities can range from local community service projects and awareness campaigns to fundraising events supporting broader initiatives of the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW. The exact opportunities vary depending on the program stage and the specific focus areas of each year group.

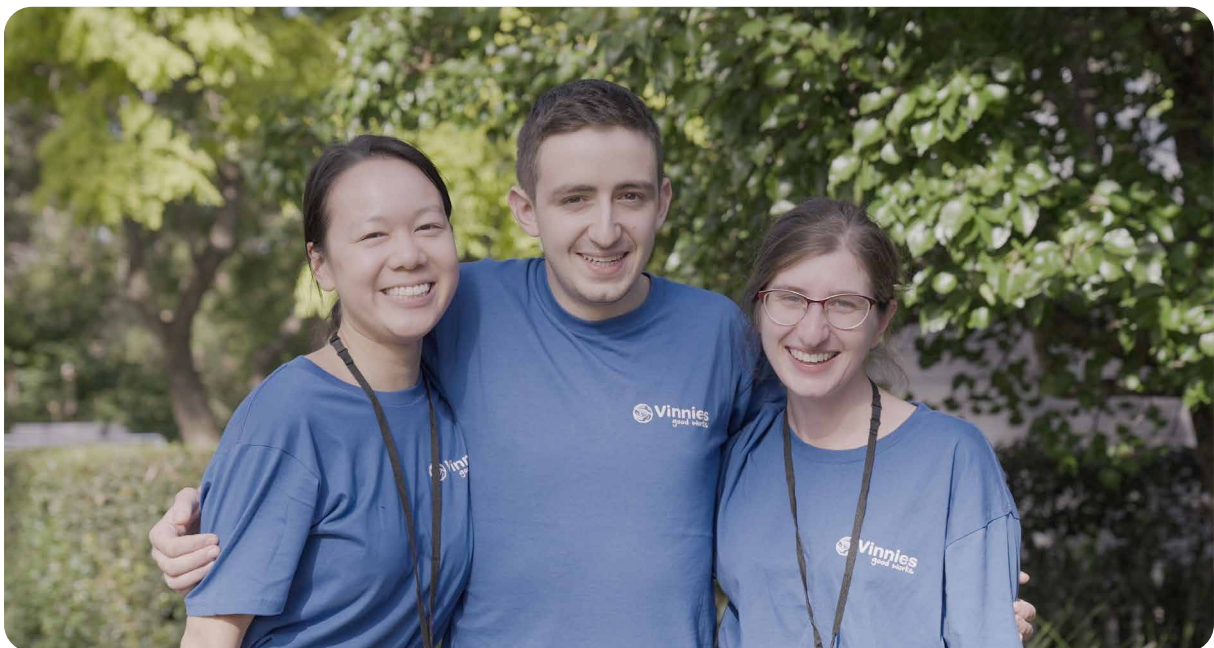
## How can schools or students sign up for the VSM program?

Interested schools should contact Vinnies NSW directly on [vsm@vinnies.org.au](mailto:vsm@vinnies.org.au). The VSM team will provide information on registration procedures, program guidelines, and support materials.

Students should express their interest to their school's program coordinator or relevant staff member to learn more about the specific enrolment process at their school.

## How does the VSM program promote social justice and community service?

The VSM program is designed to actively engage students in understanding and addressing pressing social justice issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental justice. Through a structured program of education, reflection, and direct action, students are encouraged to become advocates for change. The program's volunteering and fundraising activities are tailored to make a tangible impact, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and empowering students to contribute positively to their communities.



## What are the benefits of participating in the VSM program for students?

Students who participate in the VSM program gain numerous benefits, including:



**Skill Development:** Leadership, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills are cultivated through active participation in program activities.



**Community Impact:** Students contribute to meaningful change and make a positive difference in the lives of others.



**Personal Growth:** The program encourages self-reflection, helping students understand their values, strengths, and role in society.



**Recognition:** The Vinnies Service Medallion serves as a symbol of the student's commitment to social justice and community service.



**Networking:** Students connect with like-minded peers and mentors, building a supportive network of individuals passionate about social justice.

## How is the Vinnies Service Medallion awarded, and what does it signify?

The Vinnies Service Medallion is awarded to students who successfully complete the requirements of each stage of the program. The medallion is a symbol of the student's dedication to understanding social justice issues and their active participation in community service and volunteering initiatives. It represents the hard work, commitment, and positive impact that the student has made through their involvement in the VSM program.

## What happens if a student is unable to complete a stage of the VSM program?

The VSM program recognises that students' circumstances may change.

Should a student be unable to complete a stage, program coordinators will collaborate with the student to identify challenges and offer support as needed. Depending on the individual situation, students might receive additional time to fulfill requirements, or alternative arrangements may be provided. This ensures that every student has the chance to proceed with their journey in the program.

Likewise, if a student desires to commence the VSM program at a time other than the start of Year 7 (for instance, halfway through Year 7 or during Year 8), program coordinators will work closely with them. This collaboration aims to guarantee that these students have the opportunity to earn their Vinnies Service Medallion, irrespective of their enrolment time.



## Can students participate in the VSM program individually, or is it a group activity?

The VSM program offers a mix of individual and group activities, allowing students to experience both personalised and collaborative approaches to learning and volunteering. While some aspects of the program may require individual reflection or action, many activities are designed to promote teamwork, peer learning, and community engagement.

## Are there any opportunities for parents or guardians to get involved in the VSM program?

Yes, the VSM program values the involvement of parents and guardians and recognises the important role they play in supporting their children's education and development. While the primary activities are student-focused, there are opportunities for parents and guardians to engage with the program, such as attending information sessions, supporting fundraising events, and participating in community service activities alongside their children.



## What is required by the VSM facilitator?

The VSM facilitator can be any staff member at the school, regardless of their role. The facilitator will liaise with the VSM team who will provide all relevant resources for the program. The program emphasises engagement and participation for success, therefore teachers will only be required to report whether students have demonstrated their involvement and obtained a general comprehension.

## What are the responsibilities of a VSM facilitator?

The role of a VSM facilitator, who can be any staff member from the participating school, is pivotal for the seamless integration and execution of the Vinnies Service Medallion program within the school setting. The facilitator serves as the primary liaison between the school and the VSM team, ensuring that all necessary resources and support are provided for the program's success.

### Key responsibilities include:

- **Program Coordination:**  
Overseeing the program's implementation and being the main point of contact for the VSM team.
- **Engagement Monitoring:**  
Tracking student engagement and participation, and ensuring students grasp the program's core concepts. The facilitator is responsible for confirming that students have actively participated and have a fundamental understanding of the program's content.
- **Meeting Management:**  
Organising and conducting regular VSM meetings within the school. The frequency of these meetings is flexible and can be adapted to fit the school's schedule, with options for sessions during recess or lunch breaks.
- **Excursion Coordination:**  
Planning and leading excursions related to the VSM program, such as visits to relevant local sites or service projects, to enrich the students' learning experience and provide practical exposure to the program's themes.  
The facilitator's role is designed to be flexible and supportive, allowing the VSM program to be seamlessly integrated into the school's existing framework while ensuring a meaningful and engaging experience for the students.



## How is the VSM Program Structured and Delivered?

The Vinnies Service Medallion (VSM) program offers a blend of practical experiences and online educational components to enrich the students' learning journey.

- **Practical Engagement:**  
Students actively participate in hands-on activities, including fundraising events and volunteering opportunities. These real-world experiences are designed to deepen their understanding of social justice issues and foster a sense of community involvement.
- **Online Reflection and Learning:**  
After their practical involvement, students are encouraged to reflect on their experiences through an online journal. This reflective practice helps consolidate their learning and provides insights into the impact of their actions.

- **Educational Resources:**  
Complementing the hands-on activities, students have access to an array of educational materials. This includes a specially curated workbook or factbook, accessible through interactive platforms like Kahoot. These resources offer in-depth information on the social justice topics covered in the program and are designed to engage students in a dynamic and informative way.
- **Engagement in VSM Opportunities:**  
Alongside the educational content, students will participate in designated VSM opportunities, allowing them to apply their knowledge in practical settings and contribute meaningfully to their communities.  
Through this integrated approach, combining practical involvement with reflective learning and comprehensive educational resources, the VSM program ensures a holistic and impactful experience for all participants.



# Vinnies Service Medallion



## Contact

Please express your interest by emailing the VSM program coordinator with the name of your school, primary contact and their details.

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**Maggie Lipu**

Vinnies Service Medallion Program Coordinator

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