

The Upwey South Primary School Junior School Council is facilitating a community engagement event called “Homeless at Home” to coincide with Homelessness Week 3-8<sup>th</sup> August 2020. <https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/campaigns/homelessness-week-2020>

Please see over page for more information.

**Family and Individual participation is entirely voluntary, but as 100% of the money raised from this event will go to the Dandenong Ranges Emergency Relief Service, to support people in the Yarra Ranges who are close to/currently experiencing or recovering from Homelessness, we hope that as many families as possible will join in.**

- Before we commence school wide promotion of this event, we wanted to give parents and caregivers a chance to go on a journey of discovery themselves. Suggested watching is:

<https://www.sbs.com.au/ondemand/search/filty%20rich%20and%20homeless>

Author and Journalist Benjamin Law (participant in Series 2) says; “we are predisposed to seeing people with problems as problems. If we don’t actually see them as people, potential family members, friends, relatives who are experiencing (homelessness), it just robs them of every shred of their humanity, we just reduce them into abstract problems, which is the problem in the first place”

*Homelessness is a complex problem that requires a complex response from everyone in our community. We can’t fix it ourselves, but we can boost the financial resources of the local agency that has the knowledge and skills to help those in crisis.*

- **Kids will naturally have lots of questions and we respect that each family will need to tackle these from their own unique set of values and experience.** There are many resources available to help, just a few are:
- [https://www.samaritans.org.au/news\\_article/explaining-homelessness-poverty-kids/](https://www.samaritans.org.au/news_article/explaining-homelessness-poverty-kids/)
- <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-12/how-to-explain-homelessness-to-children/9840734>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6R8\\_MkY58M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i6R8_MkY58M) (Children’s Story “The Lady in the Box”)

Promotion of ‘Homeless at Home 2020’ will commence at the beginning of Term Three.

**We respect the individual circumstances of each family may mean that this event is not for you, that is totally ok.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Dandenong Ranges Emergency Relief Service on 9754 7777 or [enquire@drers.org.au](mailto:enquire@drers.org.au)

# Homeless at Home

Date: Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August – Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2020

Donation: \$5 per family **100% of donations go to the Dandenong Ranges Emergency Relief Service**

Location: Your home (but with a few modifications to have a tiny taste of homelessness in the safety of your own home)

## **What's it all about?**

- On any given night in Australia 116,000 people are homeless
- 8000 of whom have no other choice but to sleep 'rough' on park benches, in the forest, under bridges, anywhere that gives a little shelter
- The remainder survives in crisis accommodation, boarding houses or by staying temporarily with friends or extended family also known as couch surfing
- 4000 of the homeless are children under the age of 12
- Our local support agency Dandenong Ranges Emergency Relief Service needs our help to support people before, during and after homelessness.

## **We want to help, how does it work?**

To coincide with Homelessness Week 2020, children and families of USPS and neighbouring schools will be asked for one night, to give up a few of the things we all take for granted; heating, lighting, transport, a comfy bed, a hot shower, access to modern conveniences and in-between meal snacks.

Unlike real homelessness which presents an absence of safety and security, your participation in this event will occur in the safety of your own home with each family free to decide which level of participation they feel they are able to achieve.

**More information will be sent out at the start of Term 3**