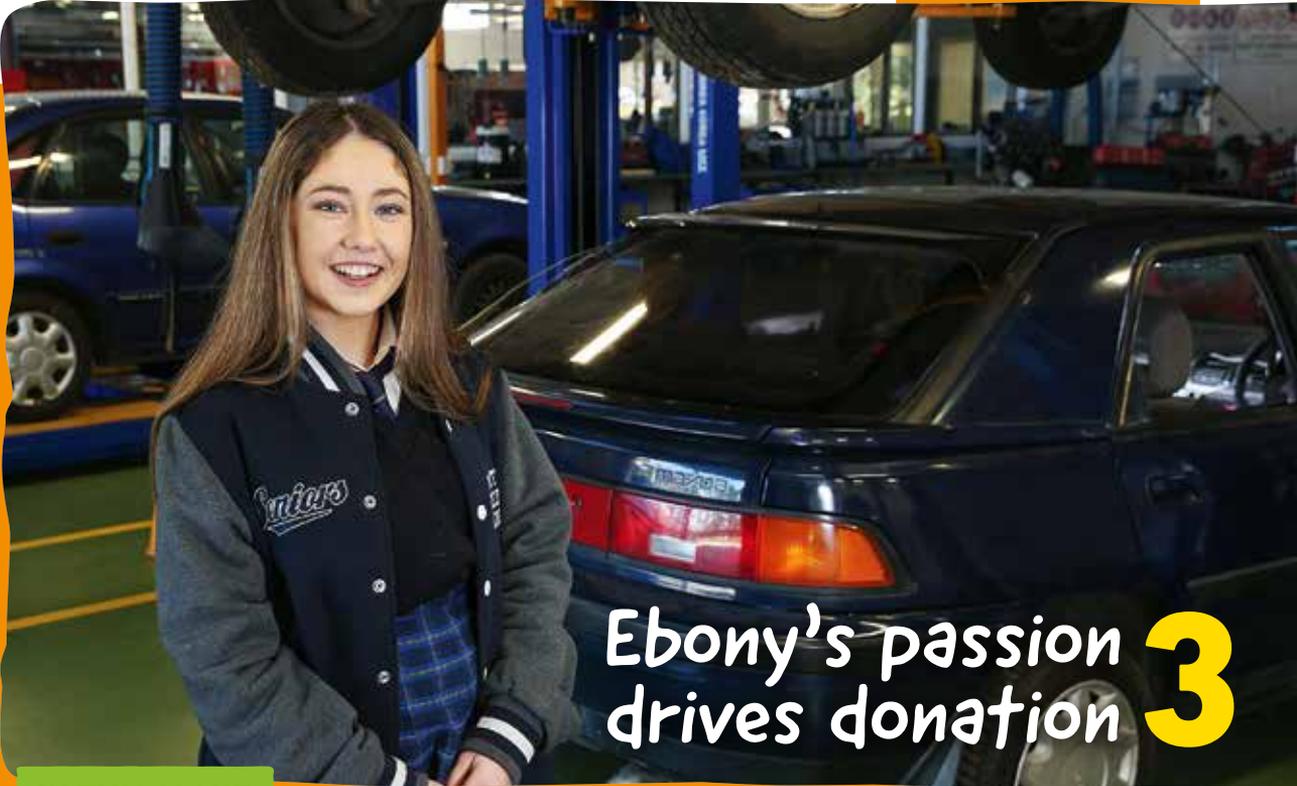




# UNDERCOVER NEWS

SPRING 2017



## Ebony's passion drives donation **3**

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## WHO WE ARE

**OUR VISION** Where no young person in our community is homeless.  
**OUR MISSION** Providing young people at risk of homelessness the foundations to strengthen their connection to family, community and education, and make a lasting difference in their lives.

# INVESTING IN PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES MAKES SENSE

**The longer days and warmer nights of spring come as a relief to many of us, none more so than those sleeping rough. The winter months bring about harsh reminders of what it might be like to be homeless. I imagine not having the luxury of a warm house, a meal or a safe place to sleep. And then I imagine being a young person with nowhere to go.**

For a young person experiencing homelessness, or displaying risk-taking behaviour spending nights away from home, winter can be a very lonely time. Many young people believe they are better off living away from home permanently. Sometimes the pressures of an overcrowded home coupled with the burden of mental health issues, trauma or grief, mean young people feel like they don't have a choice, they must leave.

We know a studio can be the lifeline many young people and their families so desperately need. The sad reality is we don't have the funds to keep up with the increasing need.

We have been actively preventing youth homelessness for almost 30 years, and yet continue to struggle to secure consistent government funding for our work. I strongly urge the Victorian Government to find a place within mainstream funding for the Kids Under Cover Studio Program and to work together with us to prevent homelessness.

In the midst of winter we had 40 young people on our wait list for a studio, that's 40 young people at risk of becoming homeless. Sadly, without additional support from the Victorian state government Kids Under Cover can't intervene and change the fate of these young people and their families.

In a recent funding announcement, the Victorian state government committed an additional \$27m to upgrade rooming houses and provide

additional accommodation for Victorians experiencing homelessness. Sadly, once again we see a lack of real commitment (financial or resources) directed towards prevention and early intervention. Until we address early intervention and prevention in a meaningful way we will continue to see an increase in homeless young people entering the system.

Recently, an evaluation of our programs was conducted by EY on our behalf. This Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis has provided us with a clear understanding of the benefits of our early intervention and prevention strategies. This comprehensive report reveals the extent of the economic and social impact of our Studio and Scholarship Programs. (See page 5 for an overview.)

It was heartening for me to read the results from this analysis and understand the positive changes being made. Not only for the young people but their carers and other young people residing within the main home. Unsurprising to read is the cost savings attributed to government through reduced costs in housing services, costs to the health and justice systems.

With this in mind, investing in preventative strategies makes clear economic and social sense.

I continue to be overwhelmed by the generosity of our kind-hearted supporters and I look forward to catching up with many of you over the coming months. Thank you for your unwavering support and belief in what we do.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Undercover News*.



Jo Swift  
CEO, Kids Under Cover



Year 12 student Ebony Humphreys from Whittlesea Secondary College with the donated car in the school's workshop (photo by Ian Currie / Newspix).

## EBONY'S PROJECT HAS HEART

**When Ebony was asked to present on a subject she is passionate about for a school project, her first thoughts were of a friend who had been going through a tough time.**

In Year 12 at Whittlesea Secondary College, Ebony decided to play a part in preventing youth homelessness for her school VCAL project.

"A lot of other students were doing their projects on homelessness in general, but I wanted to focus my efforts on the prevention of youth homelessness because a friend of mine was living out of home," said Ebony.

A 1990 Mazda Astina was given to the school workshop by a local man, who had it from new, but couldn't do it up himself. Some of the students fixed it up, and Ebony decided to donate it to Kids Under Cover.

"I wanted to make a difference to young people, once I found out about Kids Under Cover through the website and read about Donate Your Car® I knew that was exactly what I wanted to do."

"Donate Your Car® seemed like a fun way to get involved, and now I want to do more, maybe we will hold a yellow top day at school and raise money that way," says Ebony.

"The Donate Your Car® program has opened a lot of teachers' eyes to ways that we can actually make a difference. The school often receives cars for the automotive workshop, where students work on them, so I think there is definitely opportunity for other cars to be donated to Kids Under Cover in the future too."

Now that the car has been donated and auctioned at Manheim, Ebony is busy preparing a presentation on her project which she will deliver at the end of the year.

"I am looking forward to reporting back to the class on the difference we can all make, and how easy it was to get involved and help prevent youth homelessness."

[donateyourcar.org.au](http://donateyourcar.org.au)

# THE HOME STRETCH CAMPAIGN TURNS ONE

**Making great progress since its inception in August 2016, the Home Stretch campaign continues to push to change legislation for young people leaving care.**

Over the past 12 months 120 organisations and 2,500 people have joined the fight, believing care should be extended to 21 years for young people in the Out-of-Home Care<sup>1</sup> system.

Across Australia, more than half of all jurisdictions have launched the campaign and have begun advocating, lobbying and raising awareness.

Australia's housing affordability crisis is having a significant affect not just on those doing it tough. Millennials and their families are feeling the pinch with latest data released by the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) showing well over 50% of people under 25 have never left home. In some cities and age groups that figure rises to over 80%<sup>2</sup>.

Many young people who have been in Out-of-Home Care have no choice but to leave when they turn 18. With few domestic or life skills and no idea where to start, this is a formula for failure.

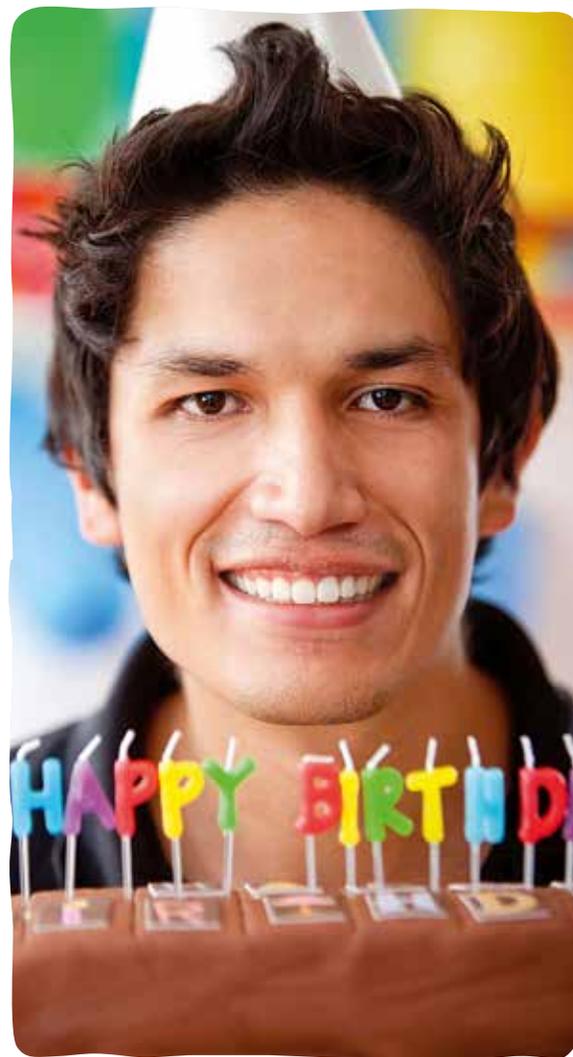
Extending state care from the age of 18 to 21 makes sense and is one effective way of taking action to end youth homelessness.

Millennials are living longer at home while young people in care are being turned loose at 18. Would you kick your child out at 18?

Extending the leaving age to 21 would provide an opportunity for more young people to complete further education and find employment. Surrounded by the right people, with the right

support will ensure they are more prepared and in a better position to live independently.

Congratulations to the Home Stretch campaign on the success and awareness raised so far. We know there is still a long way to go and encourage everyone to get involved, sign up to show your support at [thehomestretch.org.au](http://thehomestretch.org.au)



<sup>1</sup> Out-of-home care refers to the care of children and young people up to 18 years who are unable to live with their families (often due to child abuse and neglect). It involves the placement of a child or young person with alternate caregivers on a short- or long-term basis, Victorian Department of Human Services, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> [www. http://thehomestretch.org.au/](http://thehomestretch.org.au/)

## SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT OVERVIEW

**Kids Under Cover is a not for profit organisation dedicated to preventing youth homelessness through early intervention and prevention.**

The Kids Under Cover model is delivered via the Studio and Scholarship Programs.

The Studio Program coupled with the support of a Kids Under Cover scholarship enables at-risk young people to remain connected to family or carers, the community, education or training.

This early intervention and prevention approach benefits not only at-risk young people but their carers also benefit from the efforts of Kids Under Cover. The programs have also benefited Community Service Organisations and state and federal governments through reduced costs and improved efficiency.

Supported by EY (formally Ernst & Young), a Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis of the Kids Under Cover programs was undertaken to determine the socio-economic returns for all stakeholders affected by the issues of youth homelessness and overcrowding. Returns over a six-year period from 2010-2016 were considered.

The SROI methodology was used to identify, measure and value the impacts of the Kids Under Cover intervention for each stakeholder, including young people and their carers along with government and community sector partners.

SROI is an internationally recognised, principles-based approach for understanding

and measuring the impacts of a program or organisation. It provides a framework for measuring and accounting for the broader concept of value.

The findings of the SROI analysis have shown a Kids Under Cover intervention can transform the lives of young people and their carers.

Lives of young people have improved as a result of the Kids Under Cover Studio and Scholarship Programs. The greatest improvements in the lives of young people were in the following ways:

- Decreased likelihood of homelessness
- Improved interpersonal relationships
- Improved emotional wellbeing and peace of mind (reduced stress, greater safety and identity)
- Improved independence

For the carers of young people, the results have also been excellent. The positive outcomes for carers included:

- Improved interpersonal relationships
- Improved emotional wellbeing and peace of mind (reduced stress, personal time)
- Improved social inclusion
- Improved financial health

*Please refer to page 10 for the Key Findings from the SROI analysis.*



## A WHEELY GOOD PARTNERSHIP

With over 250 locations across Australia we are pleased to welcome Kmart Tyre & Auto Service as a new partner of Donate Your Car®.

Kmart Tyre & Auto Service provides a full range of automotive services including scheduled servicing, tyres, brakes, suspension, batteries and general mechanical repairs. They are one of Australia's largest and most respected automotive service, repair and tyre retailers.

We caught up with the team from Kmart Tyre & Auto Service at the Australasian Fleet Management Association Conference in Melbourne earlier this year. Talking with them about the Donate Your Car® program highlighted the challenge they face when dealing with vehicles left abandoned by owners. We were happy to offer a solution!

Committed to making a difference, Kmart Tyre & Auto Service will donate abandoned vehicles to our Donate Your Car® program. Taking their support one step further, for every car that is collected from one of their stores, Kmart Tyre & Auto Service will also make a \$300 donation.

Thank you for the support, we look forward to growing this partnership during the years ahead.

Visit [ktas.com.au](http://ktas.com.au) to find your nearest store.



Bianca Richards and Kerry Butcher from Kids Under Cover with Adam Pay and George Gebran from Kmart Tyre & Auto Service.

## HOMELESSNESS WEEK 2017 ACTION AND INNOVATION

Homelessness Week is an annual event used to raise awareness of people experiencing homelessness and the challenges they face.

The theme of this year's Homelessness Week was 'Action and Innovation', a chance to highlight the many effective approaches specialist services continue to implement to respond to homelessness.

We believe action starts with awareness. During 7-13 August, we encouraged our supporters to help shine a light on the issue of homelessness. Talking to others about making a difference, sharing information and participating in events organised during the week, all contribute to a more cohesive community.

The Kids Under Cover Studio and Scholarship Programs are leading the way in innovative intervention and prevention strategies.

We are not alone, there are many organisations within the sector delivering innovative services to those experiencing homelessness, and others providing innovative solutions to the crisis. Yet funding for homelessness services has remained static over the past few years, with funding for prevention almost non-existent.

New census data soon to be released is sure to show a significant increase in the number of Australian's experiencing homelessness. No surprise to those in the sector.

The private rental market has become unaffordable pushing low income earners out and social housing numbers are at their lowest rate in 60 years. There is no doubt that we are at absolute crisis point.

Creating affordable housing is the foundation to addressing homelessness in Australia.

Of the more than 67,700 properties listed for rent in metropolitan and regional parts of Australia (on the weekend of 1-2 of April 2017), just 29 were affordable for a young person on

Youth Allowance or Newstart. So if young people are unable to afford to rent a place to live, where are they to go?

During Homelessness Week the Council to Homeless Persons launched a new campaign calling on 100,000 new public or community housing properties over the next five years to help end the housing crisis. Keeping a roof over your head has never been harder. This campaign is about seeing real solutions to Australia's biggest social and economic problem.

Visit: [endthehousingcrisis.org.au](http://endthehousingcrisis.org.au)



# DECADES OF SUPPORT CEMENT PARTNERSHIP

**Supporting Kids Under Cover since the early 1990s, Incolink have made a significant difference to our organisation, sharing in our vision of a community where no young person is homeless.**

During the early days, support from Incolink included the provision of office space for Kids Under Cover staff and equipment along with secretarial and accounting assistance.

Over the years, we have grown together. To date Incolink have donated over \$750,000, an investment in keeping families together.

A member based organisation, Incolink provides its members with a valuable safety net through redundancy payments, portable sick leave, income protection insurance and

support services through a wellbeing and support team.

The ongoing support received from Incolink has been instrumental in enabling us to deliver our programs efficiently and professionally.

We are very grateful to the Board of Incolink who have committed to a final investment, providing a \$100,000 grant to support the ongoing delivery of our Studio Program while we work to develop more reliable streams of ongoing revenue.

Their legacy will be a strong and sustainable Kids Under Cover that can continue to build foundations to prevent youth homelessness.

We appreciate their support and partnership, and look forward to what can be achieved over the next 12 months.



Kids Under Cover CEO, Jo Swift with Dan O'Brien, CEO, Incolink.

Jack Nicholls from Probuild with Martin Murley (Kids Under Cover), Alex White (Gandel Philanthropy), Genevieve Timmons (Portland House Foundation) and Ben Rodgers from Inner North Community Foundation.



## FAWKNER COMMUNITY DELIGHT IN CUBBY DONATION

**A generous supporter of our work, Portland House Foundation purchased the 'Chameleon' cubby built by Probuild at this year's Cubby House Challenge® event.**

Paying it forward for a second year, the cubby was gifted to the Inner North Community Foundation who found a welcome home for it at Fawkner Community House.

Kids Under Cover were delighted to receive an invitation to attend the handover of the cubby in June alongside friends from Portland House Foundation, Gandel Philanthropy and Probuild.

The Inner North Community Foundation hosted a wonderful morning with local families and children from the centre, who will benefit from the generosity of both foundations for years to come.

Ben Rodgers, Executive Officer, Inner North Community Foundation, said the placement of the cubby, "Provides a rich example of partnership and collaboration, we're thrilled to have another concrete example of how our work

strengthens prosperous, connected and cohesive communities in Melbourne's Inner North."

Guests at the launch event were treated to a performance by the Heart and Soul Community Choir, followed by a variety of delicious biryanis provided by the community house.

Fawkner Community House were over the moon to receive the cubby, a welcome addition to the playground for the children, one which will most certainly be used every day.

Kids Under Cover CEO, Jo Swift was pleased to see another cubby being placed with a community centre, saying "This cubby represents more than just a space to play, it represents collaboration at the highest level. The Cubby House Challenge® has become a powerful way to connect different community groups, offering other avenues of support, as we have seen in this instance. I applaud the Portland House Foundation for continuing to think outside the box when it comes to philanthropy."



# WHAT IS THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF PREVENTION? continued from page 5

## SROI KEY FINDINGS

The findings from the SROI analysis are clear; the Kids Under Cover Studio Program is effective in achieving its aim of creating life-changing value for young people living in overcrowded conditions and who are vulnerable to homelessness.

The evidence provided within the SROI analysis has shown:

- For every dollar invested in Kids Under Cover over the past six years, \$4.17 of social value is returned.
- Over six years the Kids Under Cover model generated \$63.129 million of social value.
- The social value returned to the Government and to CSOs was more than \$6 million across six years.
- Most of the value of Kids Under Cover's interventions is felt directly by those assisted by the Studio or Scholarship Programs, with EY calculating that the social return for those young people equates to over \$30 million over the last six years.
- Kids Under Cover's benefits are felt more widely than just by those young people identified as being at-risk. Other young people over 12 years old within the household have returned a social value greater than \$16 million.
- The social value returned to primary carers (parent or carer of the young people) was greater than \$9 million.
- The criminal justice system, health system and specialist homeless services have benefited through Kids Under Cover's early intervention, resulting in sizable savings. The homeless service system, providing emergency or short-term accommodation, accrues the majority of these savings, relieving pressure that would otherwise have cost \$4 million over the last six years.

For a copy of the full Executive Summary or EY report, which includes a full list of assumptions and sources, along with more detailed calculations, please contact Kids Under Cover directly;

**E:** communications@kuc.org.au  
Subject line: SROI Report query

**T:** (03) 9429 7444  
**W:** kuc.org.au

Kids Under Cover SROI team  
PO Box 5141, Burnley VIC 3121



**YES I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Please make a donation by completing this form and returning it in the reply paid envelope provided.

Please accept my gift of  My own choice \$ \_\_\_\_\_  \$35  \$70  \$105

I enclose a  Cheque  Money Order (please make your gift payable to KIDS UNDER COVER)

– OR –

Credit card – please debit this card:  Mastercard  Visa  Amex  Diners

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Expiry:   /   CSC No.

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Contact Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- Send your donation form in the enclosed reply paid envelope or mail to **Kids Under Cover, PO Box 5141, Burnley VIC 3121**
- Call us on **1800 801 633**
- Visit our website **kuc.org.au**

Gifts of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Personal information is collected to process donations, issue tax receipts and to send you updates. For these purposes, your information may be shared with trusted third parties and our service providers (and their directors, servants and agents), either in Australia or overseas. Failure to provide personal information may result in Kids Under Cover being unable to provide you with certain information and updates. Our Privacy Policy – [kuc.org.au/privacywhistleblowingfeedback/](http://kuc.org.au/privacywhistleblowingfeedback/) – contains information about: (i) how you can access and correct your personal information; (ii) how you can lodge a complaint regarding the handling of your personal information; and (iii) how any complaint will be handled by Kids Under Cover. You may contact our privacy officer with any queries via email: [kuc@kuc.org.au](mailto:kuc@kuc.org.au) or mail: Kids Under Cover GPO Box 5141 Burnley VIC 3121 or telephone: 1800 801 633.

Please tick here if you do NOT want to receive future communications from Kids Under Cover.

Occasionally we allow like-minded organisations to contact you with information that may be of interest to you, including some organisations located outside Australia. Those organisations allow us to do the same and this way we can reach more people with vital information.

Please tick here if you do NOT want to receive communications from organisations we trust.



Please update your address details if the information we have is incorrect.

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**Thank you for your support!**



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**THIS SPACE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY KIDS UNDER COVER.**

By providing living space to young people at risk of homelessness, Kids Under Cover gives them the opportunity to pursue a better life.

**READ HOW OUR SPACES PREVENT  
YOUNG PEOPLE BECOMING HOMELESS.**

**KUC.ORG.AU**

