



Connections

child, youth and family services

MEDIA RELEASE

Attention: COS, news, social affairs, youth, health & community

20 November 2009

CHRISTMAS IS A GREAT SEASON TO GIVE

CONNECTIONS LAUNCH CHRISTMAS FOOD & GIFT APPEAL

Connections UnitingCare is today encouraging people across Melbourne to donate now to their Christmas Food & Gift Appeal that directly supports marginalised and disadvantaged children, young people and families.

2009 has been a tough year for many families, with the impact of the Global Financial Crisis putting enormous pressure on people already struggling.

'We're calling on the local community to support us in this Appeal,' says Connections Chief Executive Officer, Ms Angela Forbes. 'This Appeal very effectively delivers important Christmas items directly to those most in need. Our Case Workers, sometimes hand-in-hand with their clients, will select items that have been generously donated by members of the community,' said Ms Forbes.

Connections UnitingCare is a community organisation with a long and proud history of supporting marginalised and disadvantaged people. We offer a range of services across a continuum of care from preschool and childcare through to counselling and in-home support. We provide innovative and early intervention programs that support children, young people and their families giving them a better chance in life now and in the future.

The Connections Christmas Program is linked to UnitingCare's SHARE Christmas Appeal that has a long-standing partnership with Target stores across Australia, that sees Christmas Trees placed in the foyer of many Target stores. In 2008 UnitingCare was able to provide a total of 92,227 gifts throughout Australia and the Connections Christmas Food & Gift Appeal supplied nearly 1600 gifts and 339 hampers to 1500 individuals.

'It's true that Christmas for many people is a time of great celebration, but for others, it is a time of extra emotional and financial pressure. We hope that, with the generosity of Target customers and members of the public we can make this time of year a little brighter for people in need. You can help us to provide that Christmas cheer, just by contributing to us at this special time of the year,' said Ms Forbes.

Make a difference this Christmas.

Be one of the first to donate a gift at Target or make a donation of non-perishable food items and gifts at any one of the Connections offices in Blackburn, Cranbourne, Croydon, Dandenong, Mount Waverley, Narre Warren, Pakenham, Ringwood or Windsor. For details of your local Connections office or more information about the work of Connections, please visit our website www.connections.org.au

Media: Connections Chief Executive Officer, Angela Forbes is available for interview. Photos of Christmas Appeal Coordinators with donated food and gifts are available. Contact Connections Communications Officer Kirrilee Torney on 03 9271 0800 or kirrilee.torney@connections.org.au

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More information at www.connections.org.au