

Media Release
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Nothing says 'I love you' like a clean pair of undies this Valentine's Day

This Valentine's Day, Wayside Chapel is calling all Sydney-siders to share the love and forgo meaningless gifts in favour of making a donation that gives the gift of clean undies and dignity to someone experiencing homelessness.

There are 37,715 people experiencing homelessness in NSW, an increase of 37% from 2011. Almost a third of people accessing homelessness services are women and children escaping domestic and family violence. Many of these people turn up at Wayside Chapel on the worst day of their lives - hungry, lonely and without clean underwear and clothes, or access to hygiene and showers.

A warm welcome, a hot shower and a clean pair of undies mean the world to someone sleeping rough. In an average week, Wayside Chapel provides 330 changes of clothes and 270 showers and toiletries, 2,434 low cost meals and drinks, and 124 instances of health, accommodation and legal support to the people who need it most.

Wayside Chapel's annual 'Nothing says I love you like a clean pair of undies' fundraising drive aims to raise \$45,000 to ensure that its Community Services Centre's stocks of new undies and socks are maintained throughout the year. Funds raised will also ensure that people experiencing homelessness can access mental health support or support to find stable accommodation.

The Wayside Chapel's CEO and Pastor, Jon Owen, says "Without necessities like clean underwear, clean clothes and a shower it is impossible for a person to function properly. The same goes for people sleeping rough. By giving someone the gift of clean clothes, and undies, you give them the dignity to be able to feel human again and take the first steps towards turning their lives around and moving towards better health and better days. People come to Wayside Chapel because we provide unconditional, practical love 365 days a year without judgement."

Your Valentine won't go without either. In return for the ultimate declaration of love of donating to provide undies for the homeless, Wayside Chapel will send your special someone a card by post or email for Valentine's Day, to let them know that in lieu of a gift, you have donated on their behalf to help someone living on the streets. Warm, fuzzy feelings are felt all round, knowing that as a couple you have given back for the greater good.

To donate, simply go online at <https://waysidechapel.org.au/valentines> and we will ensure your loved one receives their "undies" Valentine card by Valentine's Day.

For further media information, or interviews with CEO/Pastor Jon Owen or Wayside Ambassador David Wenham, contact Emilie Corish, Acting Wayside's Marketing and Communications Manager on (02) 9581 9106 / 0428 344 019 or via email: emilie.corish@thewaysidechapel.com

About Wayside Chapel

Wayside Chapel has provided unconditional love, care and support for people on and around the streets of Sydney since 1964. Today, under the banner of 'Love over Hate', Wayside runs two community services centres, Wingspan Project, outreach service, mental health program, two community cafés, and Aboriginal Program. All programs are designed to ensure that the most marginalised members of our community have access to essential health, welfare, social and recreational services, as well as a judgment-free place where people are welcome just to 'be'.