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Salvos data reveals tough times for Aussies in need at Christmas

There's been an alarming increase in the number of Australian children who won't receive Christmas presents this year, according to new Salvation Army research.

The research, commissioned through Roy Morgan as part of The Salvation Army's Christmas Appeal, shows that 1.6 million Australians with children under the age of 10 will not be providing a Christmas present to their children this year. This is an increase of more than 1 million compared to last year's figures.

The research also paints a bleak picture for Australians this Christmas, according to Major Paul Moulds.

"People living on marginal incomes and tight budgets are already carefully managing how they spend their money but with power prices escalating, housing affordability getting worse and more Australians struggling to get enough paid work, it's getting harder and harder for many people to keep their head above water," Major Moulds said.

"This research is extremely disturbing and is precisely why we ask the public to dig deep and support our Christmas Appeal."

The new research also reveals:

- A massive 735,000 Australians know 10 or more families who will experience financial hardship/poverty this Christmas.
- 69 per cent of those surveyed (equating to 13.2 million people) say Australians are losing the true meaning of Christmas.
- Eight million say the general public isn't doing enough to help Australians in need at Christmas.

- A huge 13.1 million Australians know people who will be lonely this Christmas.
- 9.5 million Australians revealed ‘paying for Christmas is getting harder and harder every year’.

“So many Australians believe we – as a nation – are not doing enough to help those in need,” Major Moulds continued.

“We encourage everyone to look out for others in their local community and share the hope and joy of Christmas. We see so much poverty and people without hope at The Salvation Army. It hits home even more at Christmas. Fortunate Australians are getting ready for a big time of year. Less fortunate Australians cannot even afford to buy gifts or even afford a get together.”

Major Moulds says the Salvos get more calls at Christmas than at any other time of year and that many people feel pain and loneliness at Christmas.

“Over Christmas we will help over 300,000 people, serve over 10,000 meals and distribute more than half a million gift and toys to people to Aussies in need,” he said.

“But the Salvos are struggling to keep up with this demand. Additionally, the face of loneliness is changing and is affecting people from all walks of life. More and more people in our community are facing isolation at Christmas.

“This holiday season let’s remember those going it alone. We have the privileged platform to be beacons of hope to others in need. Please donate to our appeal so we can bring hope where it’s needed most this Christmas.”

The Salvation Army urges anyone in need of assistance this Christmas to reach out. For anyone who would like to donate to The Salvation Army’s Christmas Appeal, a gift of \$29 will allow the Salvos to put food on the table and presents under the tree for Aussies in need.

To donate and give hope where it’s needed most this Christmas, visit salvos.org.au or call 13 SALVOS (13 72 58).

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For more information or media comment, please contact:

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