



Community Initiatives



Media Release

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National Office
Lvl 7, 580 George St
Sydney 2000

(02) 9219 2000 (phone)
(02) 9281 3854 (fax)
www.missionaustralia.com.au

MISSION AUSTRALIA OPENS ITS HEART IN CAMPBELLTOWN

Mission Australia today launched a new Financial Education, Counselling and Community hub in Campbelltown. This new support service gives locals the chance to buy brand new clothes and furnishings at a fraction of the retail price and access a range of community services from financial education and general counselling services, to training opportunities for the local unemployed.

Citi Australia provided the seed funding for the new hub, meeting the substantial cost of setting up the new programs and the facility. Stephen Roberts, Citi Country Officer for Citi Australia, officially opened the hub today.

“Financial education and supporting the Australian community are ongoing priorities for us at Citi,” said Mr Roberts.

“We are delighted to be working with Mission Australia on such a worthwhile project. Supporting people with financial education and access to affordable everyday items will make a big difference to many lives in the Campbelltown area. Supporting Mission Australia is a way we at Citi Australia can really help at a grass roots level – we look forward to working together.”

Mission Australia Operations Manager for Social Enterprise Bill Dibley said that the new hub incorporates a Big Heart retail store and would have many benefits for the local community – both those simply looking for a bargain as well as people in need of a helping hand.

“With increasing pressure on individual and family income from rises in interest rates, utilities and the cost of food, the availability of affordable clothing and furniture in the area will greatly assist locals. And since the lion’s share of clothing we sell is surplus stock from the major retailers, this means we have brand new clothes on offer at a fraction of the retail price,” said Mr Dibley.

“But the real beauty of this new hub is the social impact for the local community.

“The money from the Big Heart retail sales will directly fund the financial education programs we offer in the hub, so for example a parent can be taught how to develop an effective budget to avoid the situation of struggling to meet their bills.

“There is also a counsellor on-site to assist people with personal issues such as a relationship breakdown, or the loss of a loved one. In our experience people are often facing multiple issues so by taking a holistic approach, the outcome is better.

“And importantly in an area like Campbelltown, which has a higher than average rate of unemployment, the retail store provides a volunteering, training and employment opportunity for people who are unemployed. We are currently training and up skilling our 30 strong team of volunteers, and we’ve already taken on one of the volunteers as a Mission Australia employee.

“Whether someone is unemployed, has just gone through a relationship breakdown, or is in financial difficulty – by dropping in to the community hub here, we will be able to help you,” Mr Dibley concluded.

The Big Heart Enterprise was established in the Illawarra region 20 years ago to help raise funds for a local Mission Australia Youth Accommodation service. Over the years, Big Heart has grown to include six retail outlets, 13 full-time staff, and about 180 volunteers. Each store provides high quality, low cost clothing and furnishings to the public.

All money raised at the Campbelltown Big Heart store will fund the financial education and counselling position – ensuring the profits are 100 per cent returned to, and directly assisting, the local community. The new hub is located at: 5 Harbord Road, Campbelltown. For further information about the services come and visit the site or call Big Heart on Tel: 02 4620 0007 or Financial Education, Counselling and Community Hub on Tel: 02 4620 0201.

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Media contact: Sally Popplestone Mob: 0415 547 626 email:
popplestones@missionaustralia.com.au

About Citi

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