



MEDIA RELEASE

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CHILDREN TO RECEIVE NO CHRISTMAS PRESENTS AS ECONOMY BITES

Thousands of people in New South Wales face Christmas without a single gift, and children will be hardest hit, according to leading community service provider UnitingCare.

This year more families than ever will struggle to enjoy Christmas following the interest rate rise, unexpected job losses and the effects of the drought, according to UnitingCare New South Wales's Executive Director, Reverend Harry Herbert.

At the launch of its national Christmas Gift Appeal on Monday 13 November, UnitingCare estimates more than 30,000 people in New South Wales don't expect to be able to give or receive a single present this year.

"There is nothing more heartbreaking for a parent than seeing the look on their child's face when they realise Santa didn't come," Rev Herbert said.

"For families already under enormous pressure, not being able to buy Christmas presents for your children can push you to breaking point."

Last Christmas, UnitingCare provided emergency Christmas gifts to nearly 130,000 Australians, including 27,380 in New South Wales. This year demand is expected to increase by at least ten per cent.

"With many people in regional areas battling the ongoing effects of drought, we know more families than ever will be struggling to put a present under the tree for their children," said Rev Herbert.

Rev Herbert says that UnitingCare is working overtime to offer a solution.

"Those wanting to ensure that no-one misses out can place a gift under UnitingCare's Christmas Tree in any Target store. It's a way everyone can be someone's Santa."

Gifts can be donated at all Target stores nationwide from today, Monday 13 November, until 5pm Christmas Eve.

INTERVIEWS:

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FURTHER DETAILS / PICTURE OPPORTUNITIES:

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