

MEDIA RELEASE

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WINTER CARE PACKAGES SENT TO BRIGHTEN OLDER RESIDENTS

United Way Glenelg provided valuable hands-on experience for students at Portland Secondary College that will be support older residents during the winter season.

Under the guidance of United Way Glenelg Executive Officer Nicole Carr, the students at Portland Secondary College embarked on a heartwarming project to assemble Winter Care Packages.

"Recognising the unique challenges faced by older individuals during the colder months, the Winter Care Package project aims to provide essential items and a sense of warmth to those in need," said Ms Carr.

"The initiative received overwhelming support from the student body and the wider community, demonstrating the strong spirit of compassion."

Dakoda Robinson, teacher at Portland Secondary College said the students at Portland Secondary College will not only contribute to the well-being of older residents but also learn valuable lessons about empathy, social responsibility, and the power of community engagement.

"We are incredibly proud of our students for demonstrating their compassion in assembling the Winter Care Package project and plan to look for other opportunities we can assist in the community," said Ms Robinson.

The packages include non-perishable food items, a food voucher for purchasing perishable items like meat, fruits, and vegetables, engaging activities, reading material, a special treat, and a heartwarming personal note from Merino Consolidated Primary School.

Where possible, to support local businesses, items in the care packages have been sourced locally, emphasising United Way Glenelg's commitment to the community.

"We were graciously presented with 119 beautifully crafted blankets generously made by local artisans who selflessly dedicated their time to knitting and sewing. Julia Street Creative Space provided invaluable support throughout this endeavor. Additionally, the Friday Stitches group was engaged to sew rice bags, adding an extra touch of warmth to the packages. My Coastal Kitchen, a local cookie maker, kindly offered cookies at a reduced price to complement the donations. The Portland Community Garden graciously provided in-kind storage for the items, and we were fortunate to receive funds from All Saints Outreach, which were utilised to purchase Lego kits," said Ms Carr.

With 22.5% of Glenelg Shire's population being over the age of 65, significantly higher than the regional Victorian average, many older residents face serious health problems, chronic diseases, and the challenges of isolation and loneliness.

"Research shows that cold weather can worsen existing health issues in older individuals, while feelings of isolation and loneliness can have a detrimental impact on their physical and mental well-being," explained Ms Carr.

"The Winter Care Packages will undoubtedly make the winter season a little more bearable."

Ms Carr urged the entire community to look out for one another.

"We are playing our small part, but it is crucial that everyone looks out for their neighbours, relatives, friends, and anyone in need of a helping hand."

United Way Glenelg encourages community members to join in their efforts to make a difference this winter season.

By coming together to address the needs of older residents, this collaborative effort reflects the remarkable community spirit that thrives within the Glenelg Shire region," concluded Ms Carr.

This is the fourth year the Winter Care Packages have been delivered to older residents.

For more information on how to get involved in or contribute to the Winter Care Package initiative, please visit the unitedwayglenelg.com.au or phone 0410 513 305.

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