

NEWTOWN

Neighbourhood Centre

New(town) Beginnings #7

Dear Neighbour,

On any given Thursday afternoon, you'll see a bustling Newtown Neighbourhood Centre thanks to our weekly One Stop Shop, coordinated by my affable colleague Colin.

Described as an essential services hub, One Stop Shop provides an opportunity for us to connect people to a range of community services from legal, case management, homelessness intervention, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, gambling addiction support, plus representatives from Centrelink and NSW Housing.

Just last week, a young woman who'd been assaulted by her (unofficial) landlord, after she refused to have sex with him, was thrown onto the street. The police dropped her at the Centre with six bags containing all of her belongings, except for her ID and bank card which she had lost.

Thankfully it was a Thursday so our Centrelink partner was able to make direct contact with a local district manager and organise immediate emergency payments.

This would not have been possible without One Stop Shop, as we would have been forced to send her to the closest Centrelink office - still a train ride away. In her distressed and agitated state, and without an Opal card or money, I have no doubt she would have ended up sleeping on the streets that night.

We also connected her with our partner homelessness service, who were able to secure temporary accommodation and assigned a case worker to support her through the treacherous weeks ahead.

Apart from this vital crisis intervention, the two biggest drawcards of One Stop Shop would have to be the free lunch and social connection. While a free meal is always appreciated, for our regular guests it's predominately about being able to gather with friends and catch up on latest news.

If you ever want to see what a supportive and buoyant community looks like, then please feel free to drop on by Newtown Neighbourhood Centre on a Thursday afternoon as everyone is always welcome.

Plus, a huge heartfelt thanks to our regular One Stop Shop food donors: Oz Harvest, Two Good Food Company, Doytao Thai and Slyfox Enmore.

Take care of yourself, and others

Mel
Community Strengthening Team

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

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