



**Diversity and  
inclusion  
resource  
booklet for  
COVID-19**



**#dontforgetaboutme**



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### Introduction

The #dontforgetaboutme resource booklet has been developed by The Salvation Army's Diversity and Inclusion team to build awareness and assist local Salvos to support and include our diverse communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This booklet includes information, suggestions and resources to equip Salvos across Australia as they respond to the needs of the most vulnerable in our communities. Together, we can make sure nobody is forgotten.

### Diversity and Inclusion Team

*We believe a truly inclusive Salvation Army is one where EVERYONE belongs, develops and has opportunity to contribute to the mission.*

**Our Purpose:** to enable inclusive culture and practice across all Salvo mission expressions.

For more information and support please contact the Diversity and Inclusion team:



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Diversity and Inclusion  
Salvos Toolkit



The Salvation Army –  
Diversity and Inclusion  
Facebook Group



Inclusion and Diversity in  
The Salvation Army  
Theological Reflection

# Disability inclusion

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17.7 per cent of Australia's population live with a disability, ie: 4.4m people

One in two people (49.6 per cent) aged 65 years and over have a disability

QUICK FACTS

## What is a disability?

A disability is a condition involving total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions that restricts everyday activities.

It can result from an accident, illness or genetic disorders. A disability may affect mobility or the ability to learn in the same way as others.

## Unique challenges for people with disabilities during COVID-19

- Many are at **greater risk** due to an existing condition associated with their disability
- **Increased anxiety** in people with autism or mental illness
- **Increased stress** for parents and carers of, or people with disabilities, adapting to changes to their National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) plans, online school and therapy
- Access to **medications, shopping** and **accessible** information is challenging

## How can I help?

- **Be aware** of your neighbours, workmates and corps members who have a disability
- **Pray for and with** people with disabilities, specifically the challenges they face
- **Ask, don't assume:** ask the person "How can I best help you at the moment?"
- **Offer practical support:** helping with transport to the shops, picking up medication, providing meals, or assistance with online schooling
- **Regular contact and reassurance:** through phone calls, messages or video calls, to provide encouragement and the love of Jesus
- **Be knowledgeable:** learn how to best communicate, for example, communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing could involve sign language, using a white board or written message

Australian Government – support for people with disabilities – [resource](#)

People who are deaf or hard of hearing – Expression Australia Auslan – [video](#)

People with visual impairment – Blind Citizens Australia – [resource](#)

Easy read information on COVID-19 for people with learning difficulties – [resource](#)

Impact of Coronavirus on Autism community – Autism Awareness Australia – [video](#)



# Asylum seekers and refugees

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As of 31 December 2018, there were 25.9 million refugees and 3.5 million people seeking asylum in the world

In 2018, Australia recognised or resettled 23,002 refugees – 1.39% of global total

As of 29 February 2020, there were 39,424 asylum lodgements in Australia awaiting a decision

QUICK FACTS

## What is a refugee or person seeking asylum?

Refugee is a term often used to describe people who were forced to leave their countries to seek safety due to war, violence, conflict or persecution and have met the “definition” of a refugee under the 1951 Refugee Convention. Asylum seeker is a term used to refer to people who have lodged an application for protection or refugee status but who have not yet been assessed. Not every asylum seeker becomes a refugee, but every refugee starts out as an asylum seeker.

## Unique challenges for people seeking asylum and refugees during COVID-19

People seeking asylum and refugees are one of the most vulnerable groups affected by the COVID-19 crisis due to the unique challenges they face. Most are not eligible for Centrelink. Other major challenges include **language barriers, social isolation, visa status implications, service eligibility, employment opportunities, torture and trauma experience.**

## How can I help?

- **Get your church involved** through prayer, bible studies, sermons and advocacy
- **Emergency relief:** donate to Salvos or organisations supporting asylum seekers and refugees
- **Provide accurate information** on COVID-19 in other languages from trusted sources
- **Share ideas and activities** with children at home and/or invite them to join yours remotely
- **Show that they are not forgotten:** share God's love by creatively surmounting language barriers
- **Advocate** by writing to your local MP

Please contact the Diversity and Inclusion team member in your State for further information and resources.

Faith-based resources – Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce (ACRT) and Common Grace – Justice for People Seeking Asylum

Covid-19 information in languages other than English – Department of Health, Department of Home Affairs, SBS Language Portal – COVID-19 information in 63 languages

Information and support for people seeking asylum and refugees on COVID-19 – Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) – COVID-19 Update for refugees and people seeking asylum article and Service directories; Department of Home Affairs COVID-19 and the border: Frequently Asked Questions



# CaLD backgrounds + international students

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As per the 2016 census, 28% of the Australian population was born overseas and 21% of those born in Australia had at least one parent born overseas

International students are a significant component of our societal make up. As of February 2020, there were 593,718 international students in Australia, with the five main countries of origin being China, India, Nepal, Vietnam and Brazil

QUICK  
FACTS

## Who are migrants and international students?

The term “migrants” refers to people who move away from their usual place of residence or place of birth for various reasons. Temporary or permanent migration to Australia is conditional on satisfactorily obtaining a visa belonging to one of the several categories: permanent residency, work visa, visitor visa, business visa and temporary visa, including student visa. International students are full-fee-paying students who migrate to Australia solely to study at one of our institutions.

Research shows that migrants and international students enrich Australia's cultural, economic and social status.

## Unique challenges for migrants and international students during COVID-19

These include cultural shock and isolation caused by restricted movements in a foreign land, inability to fulfil their educational dreams, language barriers, unemployment or underemployment, financial difficulties, and ineligibility for Centrelink payments. As recently reported by The Guardian, Alexis summarises the feelings of many: “I work hard, I do my best, but I still feel defeated by this unknown enemy. I just find myself crying at night thinking, what will happen to me if this doesn't end soon.”

## How can I help?

- **Get your church involved** through prayer, bibles studies, sermons and advocacy
- **Emergency relief:** donate to Salvos or other organisations supporting migrants
- **Provide accurate information** on COVID-19 in other languages from trusted sources
- **Share ideas and activities** with children at home and/or invite them to join yours remotely
- **Show that they are not forgotten:** share God's love by creatively surpassing language barrier

National bodies such as The Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia, or Settlement Services International, or Migration Council Australia are a good place to start.

COVID-19 information in languages other than English – Department of Health, Department of Home Affairs, SBS Language Portal – COVID-19 information in 63 languages.

Find up to date COVID-19 information for international students from several Australian education providers at the Study in Australia Government website.

There are regular updates for students and their parents at the Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills and Employment.



# Family and domestic violence

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Women seeking support for partner violence are most likely to [ask friends or family for help](#)

[1 in 4 women over 15](#) experience emotional abuse by a current or former partner

QUICK FACTS

## What is family and domestic violence?

Family and domestic violence (FDV) is emotional abuse, financial abuse, physical or sexual violence, and coercive and controlling behaviour. This can include abusers [restricting your movement or isolating you from friends or family](#). FDV isn't always physical. It can happen to anyone, at any time, [no matter their age, gender or sexual orientation](#).

## Unique challenges for people in domestic violence situations during COVID-19

Self-isolation and increased stress during COVID-19 will likely see an **increase** in domestic violence incidents. Research has found that there is often a **spike in violence** against women during disasters which have similar features to the current COVID-19 crisis. The potential increase of elder abuse as an impact of the COVID-19 emergency has also been raised as an area of growing concern.

## How can I help?

- **Get your church involved** through prayer and awareness-building initiatives
- **Learn** about different types of abuse, how to recognise the signs, and how to appropriately support someone impacted by domestic violence
- **Keep in touch** with friends or family members who may be in an unsafe position. Make yourself available to be a listening ear and build trust
- **Show you care:** Send a 'we care' parcel or a message/note of encouragement
- ➔ **Contact help:** There are options for accessing safe accommodation and services during isolation. Encourage the person experiencing domestic violence to contact services directly. [1800RESPECT](#) is a national helpline
- ➔ **Be part of their safety plan:** know the code words or signals if they need to escape
- ➔ **Call 000** if someone you know is in immediate danger

Common Grace has a number resources for churches available on the subject of [Domestic and Family Violence](#).

Digital safety and privacy for dangerous environments from [eSafety](#)  
Download the [Sunny](#) or [Daisy](#) or [PENDA](#) apps for more information about safety planning and services in your local area.

Contact [1800RESPECT](#) a national information, counselling and support service, which also provides [accessibility options](#) for people with a disability or those who speak a language other than English.

DV-alert offers free [online training](#) for approved frontline workers.



# Men's mental health and suicide prevention

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On average, **one in eight men** will experience depression and one in five men will experience anxiety at some stage of their lives

The number of men who die by suicide in Australia every year is nearly **double the national road toll**

QUICK FACTS

## What is men's mental health and suicide?

Mental health is "a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community." ([Beyond Blue](#))

Suicide is defined as "an act deliberately initiated and performed by a person in the full knowledge or expectation of its fatal outcome" ([APH](#))

## Challenges for men experiencing mental health issues during COVID 19

In the case of the COVID-19 virus or any other major public health concern, many people may experience anxiety, worry or stress, as we are dealing with the unknown and with implications that are out of their control. However, it's important to remember that these feelings can be managed and that paying attention to mental health will not only help people cope during the difficult times, but also to build a strong **foundation for the future**.

In addition to this, some other challenges may include (but not limited to):

- constant changes in environment
- information that is confusing or sends mixed messages
- isolation

## How can I help?

- **Pray**
- **Meditate on this promise in scripture:** [Philippians 4:6-7](#)
- **Address worries:** learn to be comfortable asking "R U OK" about mental health issues and be aware where help is available for a mate you are worried about
- **Limit media:** encourage extended breaks between COVID-19 related coverage
- **Use trusted sources:** **check your friends are** getting the correct COVID-19 information, such as from the [World Health Organisation website](#) or [Australian Government sites](#)
- **Make future plans:** remind your friends that it helps keep things in perspective to remember that crises do pass, and there will be less stressful times ahead
- **Keep connected:** regular texts, phone or videos calls to provide encouragement, a listening ear, reassurance and the love of Jesus

Lifeline – 13 11 14 (crisis support and suicide prevention)

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

COVID-19 support from Beyond Blue – [resource](#)

Reach out, take action, and look after ourselves and each other – [resource](#)

