

MEDIA RELEASE

New research drives collective action to address disadvantage in Sydney

On Monday night 100 leaders from the Sydney community gathered for the launch of the Common Cause report. The launch event featured leading thinkers such as Hugh Mackay, Peter Shergold (Macquarie Group Foundation Professor, the Centre for Social Impact) and Stepan Kerkyasharian (CEO of the NSW Community Relations Commission).

This report is the product of a collaborative effort to build the Common Good in our city, represented by all sectors of Sydney society, including government, business and the general community. The report, authored by Dr Debbie Haski- Leventhal the NAB Research Fellow from the Centre for Social Impact, is a cross-sector initiative led by United Way Sydney in partnership with a broad range of organisations that are focused on addressing social disadvantage, including the NSW Community Relations Commission, and Perpetual Limited.

Deepening disadvantage across Sydney spurred the release of a report and an accompanying website identifying the key social and economic issues facing the Sydney Metropolitan community. "Clearly, the nature of disadvantage has changed and it's critical that we work together to create initiatives that have a measurable impact on these issues. The underlying message in this report is that despite the best endeavors of government and community organisations we have not seen an improvement in social indicators" said Doug Taylor, CEO, United Way Sydney.

"This report is a critical first step in the process of understanding the kind of city Sydney is becoming. It's good news for many, but not for all. The problems of poverty (especially post-housing poverty), social exclusion and inequality demand some urgent and creative solutions," said social researcher Hugh Mackay, Social Researcher and Author who helped compile the report.

Peter Shergold issues a call to action to the Sydney community, "The report identifies a disturbing fact, only 16% of Sydneysiders are involved with volunteering and that is half the national average. Clearly part of the problem we face in this city is the effective engagement of the broader community in tackling these issues."

United Way Sydney will now be engaging in widespread community consultation to determine what Sydneysiders think is the best way to tackle these complex issues. This consultation process will involve focus groups, deliberative forums, online interactive surveys and social media to generate a conversation about the issues.

All Sydneysiders are invited to log on to www.commoncause.com.au to have access to the Common Cause report findings and respond directly with their opinions.

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For further information, interview or photo opportunity, please contact:

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