



# Project - Back to School

**Go date:** 01 October - 30 November

Starting 01 October 2021, through to 30 November 2021, Sewing for Charity Australia's main project will be sewing library bags, pencil cases and underwear for Australian children experiencing difficulties with obtaining much needed school supplies.

Additionally we will be collecting new stationery and school items to complement our handmade items.

In Australia, 1.1 million children and young people living in poverty. Children in every state and territory across our country are being deprived of basic essentials needed for learning. The statistics are frightening - in 2013, more than 8,000 Victorian children attended state schools without basic clothing and footwear. One in five NSW high school kids suffers "severe" deprivation of life's essentials. The list goes on.

The Australian Education Union's State of Our Schools research report found that 93% of teachers use their own money to purchase supplies for their school or students and 25% of those - mostly primary teachers - spend more than \$1000 a year on supplies. Of the 7804 teachers and principals surveyed, 78% buy stationery, 76% buy classroom equipment and 44% buy library resources and textbooks.

[\(Info sourced from Give Write\)](#)

If children aren't wearing underwear, they can't attend school. Underwear is a basic necessity we take for granted, and we aim to provide as many handmade and newly purchased undies as possible to these children who would otherwise be sent home from school.

Library bags are also so important. In the majority of schools, without a bag, children aren't allowed to borrow library books to take home. This limits opportunities for children who are already facing disadvantage to cement and grow their learning through the joy of reading.

## Who are we supporting this project?

### West Welcome Wagon

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

From their website:

*West Welcome Wagon is a volunteer run not-for-profit dedicated to providing material aid and support to asylum seekers in Melbourne's west. We assist over 500 households of asylum seekers from over 30 different countries...During the first year of operation WWW supported 913 asylum seekers (155 children & 758 adults), none of whom had the right to work, and all living on less than Centrelink's minimum income while paying rent.*

### Give Write

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

From their website:

*According to the 'Profile of Children and Young People in WA' report by the Commissioner for Children and Young People Western Australia, as of February 2019, there are approximately 593 000 children and young people in WA, making up 23% of the population. Of this amount, around 44 000 of them are living below the poverty line.*

*There are approximately 6892 children and young people on the public housing waiting list. On June 30th 2017 there were 4795 children and young people in out of home care. Children in single parent families face a far higher risk of poverty, with nearly one in three children in single parent households living in poverty and one in seven in severe poverty. The number of single parent households in WA (by composition, 2016) totalled 89 718.*

## Kingston East Neighbourhood Group

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

KENG is a not for profit organisation supporting the Logan Community.

From their website;

*KENG operates from a community based neighbourhood centre and delivers a broad range of services across the lifespan including crisis accommodation, emergency relief, NILS, an occasional childcare centre, Communities for Children, Home Interaction Parenting Program for Parents & Youngsters (HIPPY), Early Years Place, Older Person's Action Program, Community Development, Family Support, Relationship and personal counselling, Skilling Queenslanders for Work & therapeutic activities.*

## Friends With Dignity

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

FWD is a not for profit organisation of passionate community volunteers assisting survivors of Domestic Violence.

From their website:

*[Friends With Dignity is] a collaborative national Not For Profit focused on improving the quality of life of any Adult and Child impacted by Domestic Violence through the provision of financial and tangible resources, programs and scholarships and enhancing the personal safety of individuals.*

## Backpacks 4 SA Kids

Website

Facebook

From their Facebook:

*A proud SA Non-Profit Organisation supporting newborn babies through to teenagers who are placed into foster or emergency care.*

*Provides clothes and personal supplies to children placed in emergency foster care, domestic violence shelters and who are under duress.*

*The backpacks we provide help to relieve some of the stress and anxiety children face when they are removed from their family, often in traumatic situations and without the opportunity to take any personal belongings with them.*

*We are a sister charity to Backpacks 4 Aussie Kids*

## **BOSS LADY NOTE:**

If you know of a school in your area who needs assistance please let me know. We encourage local creating and are happy to support as many kids as possible through this project!

## **What exactly are we sewing and knitting/ crocheting?**

Library Bags

Pencil Cases

Children's underwear

## **Details**

Where a link to a tutorial or further information is provided, please read all linked information before proceeding - the table provides a summary only for those items.

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Fabric &amp; Notions</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Link to details / pattern / tutorial</b>
All	Library Bags	Children's prints cotton and cotton blends  Anything bright and fun!  Think outside the square - plain fabrics with large patches of kids fabrics, or embroidered calico look great too!	See pattern/ tutorial	<a href="#">Threading My Way</a>  PLEASE NOTE:  Bags are to have short handles as per tutorials provided.  You may use your own pattern if preferred as long as it is in the ballpark for size as per tutorials provided  It is NOT mandatory to line or use interfacing - use your own judgment based on your fabric choice  PLEASE ADD SNAP OR VELCRO to close the bag. Only a small piece is needed between the bag handles or one snap either side of them.  Snaps can be done at the Lair if needed

All	Pencil Cases	Children's prints cotton and cotton blends Anything bright and fun!	Various	<a href="#">Random pencil case tutorials</a> <a href="#">Threading my way - Drawstring Pencil Case</a>
All	Underwear	4-way stretch fabric (natural fibres are best ie cotton, bamboo blends)	Child 4-12	You can choose your own preferred pattern, but we love the free pattern from Waves and Wild (Formerly Made by Jack's Mum) <a href="#">Speedy Pants</a>

## What other items are we collecting?

- School Supplies!
  - Pens
  - Coloured pencils
  - Crayons (wind up please)
  - HB pencils
  - Exercise Books
  - Scrap Books
  - Erasers
  - Rulers (no metal)
  - Pencil Sharpeners
  - Highlighters
  - Glue sticks
  - Printer paper
  - New Drink Bottles
  - New Lunchboxes
  - New Black school shoes
  - New White socks
  - New Underwear in sizes 4-6, 6-8, 10-12, 12-14 (kids)
  - Backpacks

## How many?

- Unlimited - as many as we can make!

## How else can I help?

Unable to sew for this project but still want to contribute? Here are a few other ways you can help:

### A. Are you local to The Sewing Lair?

- We need many hands to sort and pack the made items throughout the project. Come to a regular Thursday Charity Sewing Day, or, let us know when you're free to help.

### Not local to The Sewing Lair?

- We have groups all over the country. Join our [fb volunteer group](#) to find people near you

### B. Do you have a good eye for a bargain (or, just enjoy shopping!)?

- We need packaging supplies - clear self sealing cello bags Size A4 and A5 (ish)
- Stationery and personal care items as listed above are always needed

## Important dates

Items need to arrive at the lair no later than **10 December**. This will allow them to be sorted, packaged and sent out to our charity partners by early January 2022.

## Where do I send things?

### POST

Send any finished items or donated materials to:

Sewing for Charity Australia

38 Bladensburg Dr

Waterford QLD 4133

### IN PERSON

The Sewing Lair

30 Spans Road Beenleigh QLD

[At one of our collection points click here to view \(each state has its own tab\)](#)

## FAQs

### II. What items do we need the most?

A. All!

### III. Do I need to pre-wash my fabric?

A. Yes please! Fabric should be pre-washed hot OR washed cold and dried in a clothes dryer on hot. This serves several purposes - removal of residual dye that may run / bleed; removal of factory chemicals / residues from the fabric manufacturing process; shrinking of fabric (if it is inclined to do so). This process needs to occur BEFORE cutting.

### IV. I need fabric for this project. Can this be sent to me?

A. Yes! We can usually send you fabric from donations at the lair. If possible, please consider covering postage. Contact Admin to arrange.

### V. What courier service should I use to send in items?

A. Use whichever courier or postal service you would like. As a guide, our volunteers have found the below services to be of good value:

- For a small number of items (up to 5kg) - Australia post satchel
- For larger, heavier items (>5kg) - Sendle courier service

### VI. I made a mistake! Should I bother finishing / sending the item in?

A. Yes! Many charity groups use items of all sizes throughout the year. Even if the specific charities this month are unable to use it, be assured every item can find a grateful home.

### VII. I need some hands on guidance - can someone show me how to make one?

A. Probably! Have a chat and we may be able to find another sewing volunteer locally you can collaborate with. Youtube also has some great tutorials - and we love questions, so don't hesitate to ask!

## Still have questions?

Talk to us! We'd love to say hi :)

- Email: [volunteer@sewingforcharity.com](mailto:volunteer@sewingforcharity.com)
- Post in our Facebook group or send a private message (PM).