



**RED
SHIELD
APPEAL**

**Be the hope
people need**

From homelessness to hope

Sophie's story

Be the hope people need

Sophie is a mother caught in the terrifying trap between domestic violence and homelessness. She is totally devoted to her daughter Taylor and had tried so hard to escape, and find a home where they could be safe and free from violence, only to be knocked back again and again.

Sophie was desperate to leave her violent partner. She would do anything for her little girl, and she'd tried repeatedly to find a safe place they could call home.

Sadly, it wasn't that simple. With the housing crisis affecting every part of Australia, she couldn't find anywhere else for her and Taylor to live, let alone somewhere she could afford...

"I just kept on getting knocked back. It's a big problem.

It's a crisis situation I'm in. And getting back into that private rental market, oh, it's horrible!"

With nowhere to go, Sophie and Taylor began couch-surfing with friends and acquaintances. But as is often the case, she found that she could only spend a handful of nights with one person before having to move on.

It was exhausting. Soul destroying. And the thought of what it was doing to Taylor was killing her. Sophie described her lowest point. It came the night she slept in agony on the living room couch...

"I was beaten so bad I couldn't even turn around. I was in so much pain and petrified, sleeping on my perpetrator's couch. But I had nowhere else to go."

When Sophie woke the next morning, she faced the single hardest decision of her life. As Sophie told us herself...

"It was really, really, incredibly hard. I needed Taylor so much. But I had no money because of the abuse in the relationship. Nothing. And I didn't have anywhere to go. If I was couch-surfing, or living in my car, where was Taylor going to sleep? She's my whole life, and I'd be so lost without her.



I'll never forget the first phone call I had with Fran, my Salvos Case Worker. She said, 'Sophie, we're going to help you, for as long as you need. So don't worry, you're going to be okay.' She was amazing. No judgment. Just love. It was the best feeling in the world."

Sophie's new beginning started the day we found her and Taylor a home. As Sophie recalls...

"The Salvos found us a house and it's beautiful. I feel very blessed. It makes me so emotional, how much The Salvation Army has done for me and Taylor. Because of them, I have a home! I feel safe again! Everything's looking up. They've absolutely changed my life!"

**Name and details changed to protect privacy*

Please contact your Workplace Giving co-ordinator, payroll department or log onto your Workplace Giving platform to make a one-off donation to an amount of your choice, to give someone in need a new beginning. Make your donation before the End of Financial Year to claim back on your next tax returns.



\$10

can provide a wholesome and hearty meal for someone struggling to make ends meet



\$40

could help purchase a small heater to stay warm this winter



\$50

can help pay for an hour-long session with a financial counsellor and help a person build financial stability



\$140

can purchase a mobile smartphone so a person in hardship can stay connected with others when they need support