

## Exploring the Safety Net for people seeking asylum

### Worksheet Four What can I do?

1. Read the final sections on the financial implications for charities and state governments of not providing a safety net for people seeking asylum.

**In your school there may be opportunities for you to join in actions that are being organised for the National Week of Prayer and Action such as prayer services, Circles of Silence or fund raising. Each one of these can help change our society's attitudes and bring about a better way.**

One more way to affect change for the better, which can be used any time, is to communicate with members of parliament.

Below is a letter which you may be able to send to your local Member, the Prime Minister or whichever Minister is responsible for people seeking asylum. You can also of course compose your own letter.

You can find your local member here - <https://electorate.aec.gov.au>.

The appropriate forms of address are:

Dear Prime Minister or Minister as appropriate

Dear Senator or Dear Ms or Mr for members of the Legislative Assembly if they are not ministers.

To be taken seriously you need to include your postal address (even if sending via email).

Snail mail is said to be more effective and for some members you will be able to send emails only through their websites.

Dear

I write in relation to the support which is needed by people seeking asylum in general and in particular while their claims are being assessed.

In the interests of humanity I believe we should end offshore processing and bring people on Nauru and Manus to Australia. We should be treating people seeking asylum fairly, no matter how they come.

Those who are in our country awaiting assessment of their claims should have appropriate access to income and other supports and services, government funded legal advice, and a fair review according to the Refugee convention. All found to be refugees should be welcomed and supported. No one should be sent back to persecution.

I believe restricting access to support not only harms the people themselves but also places undue burdens on State governments and on those charities and communities who are active in support. The current policies do not even make economic sense and they are certainly cruel in their impacts on many people.

I further believe that the impacts of harsh treatment will be lasting into the future. It is well known that the costs of supporting people once they have become homeless (very likely when they have no access to support) the ongoing cost in health, justice and homelessness services is much greater than that of supporting them into housing etc.

People of my generation will be the ones who have to fix the many problems that will follow.

I urge you to put in place policies that have respect for the dignity of all.

Yours sincerely,