



Foodbank
Victoria







VicRelief Foodbank

- Higher rental
- Increased utilities
- Fixed pensions

A tale of two cities

Our families struggle while houses fetch more than a million

Food crisis | Anthea Cannon

FAMILIES with empty cupboards are becoming more reliant on local charities as wealth gap divides in the area worsen.

As 21 Maribyrnong homes sold for more than \$1 million last year, one in 20 people went without food.

Maribyrnong Council's 2009 Community Survey found 5.7 per cent of respondents had run out of food in the past 12 months and been unable to afford more.

Footscray, Seddon and Braybrook residents, single parents and renters were the most likely to have been faced with empty plates.

Although the findings were actually significantly down on 2008 figures, charity groups say they're handing out more food than ever.

Wesley Mission North-West regional manager Michele Sproule said 1154 people made use of Footscray Outreach in January.

Only City of Maribyrnong residents can use these services.

"Demand went down before

Christmas because so many corporate companies gave away food, but since then demand has escalated.

"We're generally 20 per cent above the 2000-2009 average," Ms Sproule said.

"On a daily basis we hand out huge amounts of food - 340 people in January just came for bread, which is donated from local bakeries, and 113 clients made use of our free fruit and vegetable markets every Friday, 347 came for food parcels and 376 for financial support."

"We could spend all our funding in three months but we have to make it last."

Ms Sproule said support workers were seeing people who would never have needed the service several years ago. "A lot of people are doing it really tough. It's escalating," she said.

"Recently we saw a woman with five children who had lost her job in the last year or so and had a health issue with one of her children.

"We were able to load her up with food and she was crying, saying 'I don't know how I got to this'.

"She only just had a roof over her head and actually had nothing, it was pretty tragic. She didn't even have toilet paper."

And Ms Sproule said the woman was not alone.

VicRelief Foodbank, which has its headquarters in Yarraville, gave more than \$540,000 worth of food and support to 31 local welfare agencies, schools and churches.

Fundraising manager Fran Poisson said that at times the warehouse had been forced to ration.

While most food is donated, staples such as rice and emergency materials have to be bought.

Ms Poisson estimated the newly installed fridge and freezer room and successful alliance with Melbourne Markets would also drive high demand for the foodbank's fresh, healthy food.



Ray Smith sorts through a delivery of pumpkins at VicRelief Foodbank headquarters in Yarraville.

Picture: DAVID SMITH N36WT107

Complexity of Causes

- Family breakdown
- Loss of income
- Mental illness



After years in shelters and sleeping rough, Erika Lodge, 59, enjoys the "million dollar view" from her unit on the top floor of a public housing high-rise in Kensington.

Baby boomer wave heralds new housing crisis

By **MICHELLE GRIFFIN**
SOCIAL AFFAIRS EDITOR

AS PART of the lucky baby boomer generation, Erika Lodge, 59, never imagined she'd end up homeless. She was married for 33 years, and worked for three decades as a cook and a parenting counsellor. By rights, she should be entering her seventh decade pondering whether to spend the kids' inheritance on a world cruise or a sea change.

Instead, after a divorce and a mental breakdown, Ms Lodge spent much of the past nine years struggling to find somewhere to live. She's barricaded the door of her Footscray boarding house room at night; she's sought refuge in women's shelters; she spent two months sleeping on the streets. She's only recently moved into her

single bedroom unit on the top floor of a public housing high-rise in Kensington: "My first public housing place," she says. "Million dollar view."

Ms Lodge is typical of the baby boomer women now finding their way to crisis accommodation services, says Shelley Mallett, Hanover Welfare Services' general manager of research and service development.

As the first baby boomers turn 65 this year, crisis services and housing agencies are seeing a new wave of clients who don't have a history of drug or alcohol problems, and haven't been homeless before.

These are the dinner ladies, office cleaners and housewives of the 1960s and 1970s, getting by with little or no superannuation and a checkered work history as they raised children.

If their relationships break down, their health deteriorates or their income shrinks, these women are being forced out of private rental in larger numbers than ever before.

"They present to [our services] very late," says Ms Mallett, who is overseeing a wide-ranging study of the ageing homeless for Hanover. "They don't know anything about the welfare sector. They have been couch surfing and sleeping in cars... this is an emergency problem that is going to grow, and these are people who don't need to be in the [crisis accommodation] system."

And all the research suggests that this problem is only going to get worse.

By 2008, more than 100,000 Australians over 65 were already struggling to stay in their homes, according to a study by

the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. And demand for public housing for pensioners is expected to increase by 50 per cent by 2016.

But with waiting lists for public housing as long as nine years in some areas, many older people can't find anywhere to stay. A 2007 Federal Government study of homelessness among older people found that 70 per cent of respondents over 60 were homeless for the first time in their lives.

Three-quarters of the clients of the Housing for the Aged Action Group are women now, says tenancy advice worker Jeff Fielder. "It's a whole new category. These women are quite different from the typical face of homelessness."

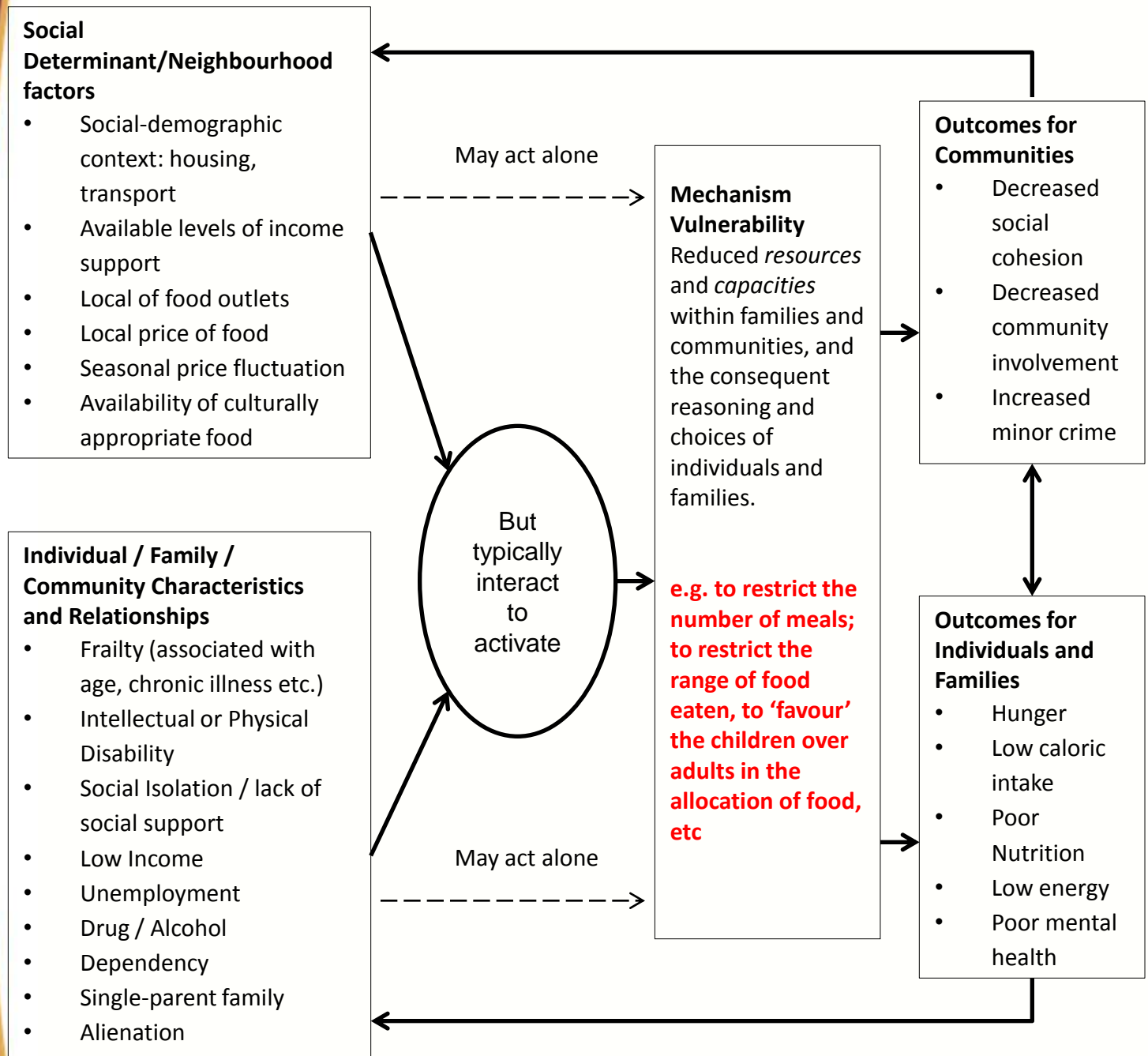
It all started going wrong for Ms Lodge in 1989, after her divorce, when she sold her

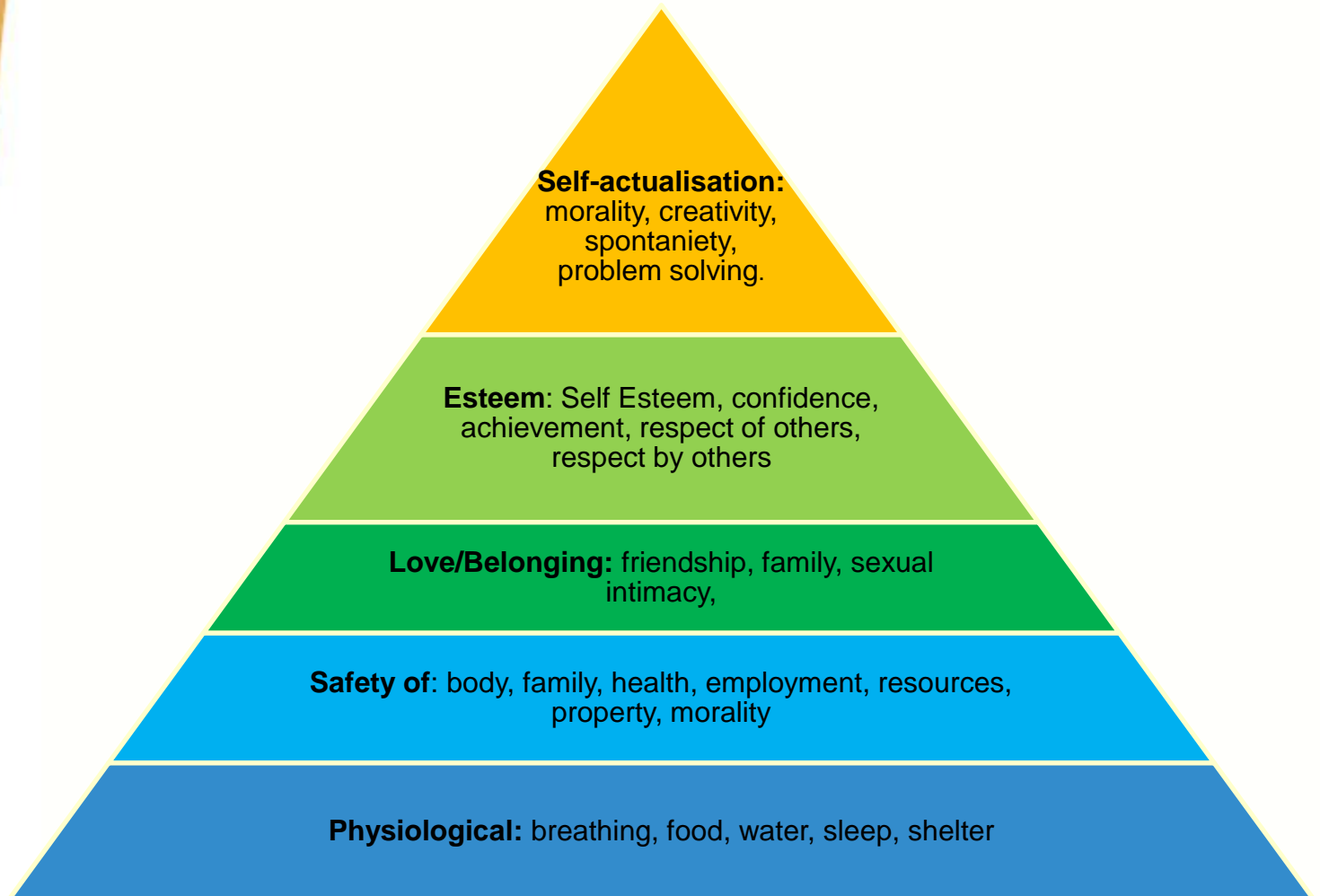
house in Endeavour Hills and put her half of the proceeds into Pyramid Building Society — just before it collapsed with debts in excess of \$2 billion in 1990.

"I cried for a week, and then got on with my life," says Ms Lodge. Her children had both left home, so she rented a room and started driving trucks, and then working with the elderly.

But in 2001, she suffered a nervous breakdown, and like a character in a movie, just packed her suitcase and jumped on a train to St Kilda: "The bright lights. It was always open at night..."

"When you have a job and your health's all right, life's all right, but when you haven't, it's survival and each day is a bonus," she says, and then adds, with a grin: "Women of my age group, it's hard for us to accept the fact that we're getting old."





Maslow's "Hierarchy of Need"

Must satisfy each layer of need before being able to plan or strive for 'higher' needs

Poverty in Australia is defined by satisfying the Physiological layer through socially unacceptable means

The Problem in Australia

- Approx 2 million Australians face food insecurity (don't know where next meal is) every year, half are kids
- 105,000 homeless in Australia (ABS 2008)
- ABS Household Expenditure Survey 2007
 - ✂ 2.6 million people (13.2%) live in low income households
 - ✂ 78% have govt pensions etc as principle source of income
 - ✂ 38% cannot pay electricity on time
 - ✂ 9% are unable to heat their homes
 - ✂ Choosing between bills being paid, or money for food – food insecurity is the result

The Problem Nutritionally

- Community Food Programs only supply 70% of need
- 66% of food used sourced from donations
- Food 'gaps' (what's needed)
 - ✿ 59% increase in fruit
 - ✿ 60% increase in vegetables
 - ✿ 58% increase in meat/fish
 - ✿ 59% increase in milk

'Community Food Programs in Victoria', April 2011

How We Do What We Do

- We seek products for Kitchen, Bathroom and Laundry
- We receive from local and National Signatory donors:



Manufacturers/Wholesalers

Close to Use By or Best Before Dates

Externally damaged packaging

Marketing idea changes (Snack 2.0 Vegemite)

Mergers/Acquisitions (Golden Circle)

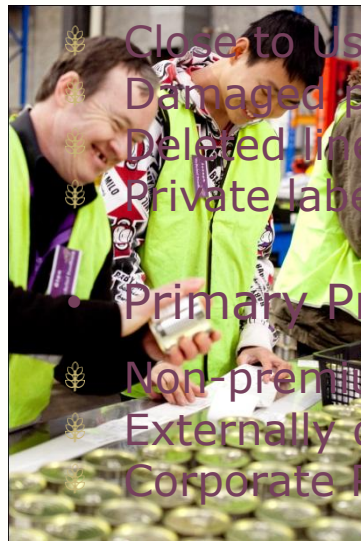
New products (Chilli Tim Tams)

Corporate Responsibility (Bread, Sugar)

Collaborative Supply



- Retailers



Close to Use By or Best Before Dates

Damaged Packaging (Store Returns)

Deleted lines

Private label

Primary Producers

Non-premium grade

Externally damaged packaging

Corporate Responsibility (Montagues, Moratis)



A large yellow landfill compactor is shown working on a massive pile of garbage. The pile is composed of various types of waste, including plastic bags, food scraps, and other debris. The compactor is positioned on the right side of the frame, with its front end buried in the waste. In the background, a clear blue sky is visible with several birds flying. The overall scene depicts a large-scale waste management operation.

Our biggest Competitor

And a great success!

37% increase in food processed

18% decrease in GHG emissions per kg!



No matter why people lack food, our challenge is to always have something to give them



85% of agencies say food is a key reason why people come to them

82% of agencies say food helps develop trust that enables other services to be provided



Who We Serve

*We support 500
agencies across
Victoria*



*'KickStart' is our school
breakfast program*

How You Can Help

- We are creating a Nutrition Toolkit for schools
- The kit contains nutrition information specific to children, how to meet the nutrition requirements, activities and recipes for children.
- Project Requirements
 - ✿ a qualified nutritionist to look at the nutrition information to see if it meets the criteria.
 - ✿ point out what is missing from the toolkit and help to provide the required information.
 - ✿ It is preferable to create a partnership where information is borrowed and acknowledged instead of reinventing the wheel.

