

Raise the Rate for Good campaign

A guide to telling the story

June 2020

RAISE
THE RATE
FOR GOOD

This Guide has been prepared by ACOSS as a resource for Campaign supporters. It is a guide to support people and organisations in sharing their own story about why we need a permanent, adequate increase to JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and other payments. The Guide is informed by evidence and research, including discussions with people receiving JobSeeker, Youth Allowance or JobKeeper, as well as people who have friends or family receiving these payments.

We are grateful to the philanthropists who provided the support for developing this Guide.

Campaign messaging principles:



Focus on personal stories

People on JobSeeker and Youth Allowance who would like to share their stories and views should be encouraged and supported to do so in a way they feel comfortable. We know that personal stories about the positive difference the increased rates of JobSeeker and Youth Allowance have made to people's lives are very powerful, as are stories about why we can't turn back to \$40 a day.



Talk about the cake, not the recipe

The impacts of COVID-19 mean that there are now many people new to the income support system who may be open to taking action. Rather than drilling down into the detail of exactly how the income support system needs to be fixed (the 'recipe' to get the outcome we need), we talk about what it would mean for people to have enough income to cover the basics (the 'cake', which is the outcome of winning the Campaign).

Primary Campaign elements

Campaign name

Raise the Rate for Good

Campaign hashtag

#RaisetheRateforGood

Campaign taglines

"Don't Turn Back"

"We can't turn our backs"

Call to action: Back the Campaign to Raise the Rate for Good

Campaign narrative

As we handle the COVID-19 health crisis and confront the economic crisis, **more people than ever before will struggle to find paid work**. There is currently only one job vacancy available for every 13 people on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance.

We can't turn back to the brutality of people struggling to survive on \$40 a day. This is not enough to live on, let alone to cover the basics, such as housing, food, bills, and transport.

As we rebuild after the crisis, we can't turn our back on those who are at risk of being left behind.

We need to Raise the Rate for Good so that everyone has enough to cover the basics of life, like a roof over head and food on the table.

We've heard from many people who used to be on the old, low rate of Newstart, that the increase to JobSeeker has meant they've finally been able to access the essentials, like prescription glasses, a fridge and warm jumpers for their children to get through winter.

To get through this crisis, we need to **support each other**, so everyone has access to the basics to rebuild their lives.

We need to let people know we have their backs. We can't turn back to \$40 a day.

Campaign ask: We can't turn back to \$40 a day. We need a permanent and adequate increase that ensures people on JobSeeker, Youth Allowance and other income support payments can cover the basics they need, including housing.

Add your voice to the story

Some Campaign supporters may want to bring their own specific perspective to the story of why raising the rate for good matters. Human, personal stories are important. The #550ReasonstoSmile is a great example, sharing stories about being able to buy reading glasses, fresh food, get teeth fixed or pay the rent on time. Campaign supporters may want to provide your own views on what you believe the future of the income support system should look like. For example, groups may want the Coronavirus Supplement to stay in place. Explain the positive difference the full Coronavirus Supplement has made. **Remember to talk about housing costs** as some people forget that income support needs to be enough to cover all the basics, including housing.

ACOSS

When ACOSS is asked about how to fix the income support system ACOSS will provide the below detail.

What should the permanent increase be?

We must Raise the Rate of JobSeeker and Youth Allowance for good so that people can cover the basics they need. ACOSS is recommending an income floor that keeps **everyone out of poverty and allows people to cover the basics**. There must be additional support for people with housing costs, people with disability or illness and people with family caring responsibilities.

How long should the Coronavirus Supplement stay in place?

We're hearing from many people that they need every cent that they are currently receiving in order to get by. Some people will need more. The current increased rates of JobSeeker and Youth Allowance must remain until we have an income support system in place that ensures everyone can cover the basics they need. This requires a permanent income floor that keeps people out of poverty and additional support for people renting privately, people with disability or illness, and people with family caring responsibilities.

Won't increasing JobSeeker create a disincentive to get a job?

An inadequate JobSeeker payment makes it harder for people to find paid work. People need enough to cover the basics, and not be in financial distress while they search for paid work. The doubling of JobSeeker to the current rate \$550 per week is still \$200 per week less than the minimum wage. People are desperate to find jobs but there are not enough available. People need confidence and hope for the future. We need to have their back.

Isn't it more important to create jobs?

We all care about creating more jobs, particularly people who have become unemployed. But there is currently only 1 job vacancy for every 13 people on JobSeeker or Youth Allowance looking for paid work. We need these payments to be enough for people to cover the basics so they can rebuild their lives.

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